

# Walsall & Willenhall CHRONICLE

Thursday, April 20, 2017

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## TEENAGE LAUREN'S LEGACY AS HER ORGANS SAVE LIVES OF OTHERS



Lauren Wilkinson

THE family of a 17-year-old girl who died following an asthma attack, have said that some of her organs have been used to help save the lives of four people.

Lauren Wilkinson, from Darlaston, who was affectionately known as Lolly, suffered with brittle asthma and a host of other allergies from birth.

She was a frequent visitor to Walsall Manor Hospital's children's emergency centre throughout her childhood.

But on January 16 this year the A-level student, who also volunteered at Darlaston Football Club, died from a cardiac arrest following an asthma attack. Since then her mother Pam Bam-

ford has given consent for her organs to be used to help others, despite being previously against the idea.

She said: "To see her like that, knowing she was gone, made me realise that if there was anything I could have been given to save her as a mum I would have taken it. It made me think about how many families there are out there waiting and hoping for an organ to give their child their life back.

"We've since been told that she has helped four people - three have received her kidneys and liver, and another has undergone a bowel transplant. And her tissue will also be used to help others."

Now her family wants to create a

lasting tribute to Lauren with the help of Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust's Well Wishers charity. The money will be used to help fund the hospital's respiratory team in the paediatric unit.

More than £5,000 has been raised so far. Lauren's relatives also want to raise awareness of how asthma can affect sufferers.

Sister Kerry Wilkinson said: "Our little sister was all about turning a negative into a positive and we see the organ donation and the fundraising we're doing as carrying on her wishes. She was such a big presence in all of our lives, she was amazing, lovable and witty and it's time for us to step up

and do her proud now." Sister Nicola Waite, who works at Walsall Council, paid tribute to the care Lauren received at the hospital and said: "They went above and beyond.

This is why we want to work with the Well Wishers charity to come up with something that can help other teenagers like her.

"It is so very hard for our family - our mum, stepdad Scott, her sisters, brother Stuart and her step brothers and sisters, to carry on without her."

Visit [www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/laurenjadewilkinson](http://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/laurenjadewilkinson) On May 7, Darlaston Football Club will host a family fun day.

### HEALTH

## A&E figures at the Manor improving

WALSALL Manor Hospital's under pressure A&E department has finally shown the first signs of recovery following a typically difficult winter period where performance slumped. In January the proportion of patients having to wait longer than the four-hour target nearly reached one in four - 24.3 per cent.

But the latest figures have shown that there was a substantial improvement in February with the hospital managing to deal with 81 per cent of people in time.

But this is still off the national benchmark of 95 per cent. Hospital staff were helped by a significant reduction in attendance in the month with 5,593 people through the doors compared to 6,401 in January.

### CRIME

## Caravan blaze is suspected arson

A CARAVAN was destroyed in a suspected arson attack. Firefighters were called to Vernon Close, Willenhall, at 8.49am on Saturday.

A crew from Willenhall and Bilston attended but the caravan could not be saved. A picture released by Willenhall Fire on Twitter showed that the back half had been completely obliterated with only a blackened and charred base remaining.

A West Midlands Fire Service spokeswoman said: "The caravan was 100 per cent destroyed by fire."

### RETAIL

## Bookshop appeal as partner falls ill

THE owner of a popular independent bookshop in Walsall has said it faces closure after his partner had a heart attack.

Scott Southey recently set up a crowd-funding website to help with an expansion to the Lower Hall Lane shop, however following co-owner Amy Carter's heart attack, he now claims the pair are trying to raise funds to save it.

He said: "Amy, my lovely other half, has been ill over the past few weeks so we had to limit the shops hours. We have put our blood sweat and tears into the shop over the past three years, so it would be heartbreaking if we had to close." To donate, visit <http://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/southcartbooks/>

### INSIDE

## FLYING THE FLAG FOR FESTIVAL



PAGE 3

MP fears move opens way for 11+ and grammar schools

# CAUTION AT FREE SCHOOLS SCHEME

PLANS for three new schools to help turn round Walsall's education standards have left the borough's political leaders divided.

As reported last week, three new free schools are to be built in Walsall after getting the green light from central government. Darlaston Technology Primary is to open in Darlaston, Willenhall Technology Primary in Willenhall and Blakenall Free School in Blakenall.

Between them they will create hundreds of extra school places across the borough, with the Government hoping they will help turn Walsall's education, which has been described as being at an 'all time low', around. It is hoped all the schools will open in time for the 2018/19 academic year.

The move has been welcomed by councillor Mike Bird, the former leader of the council.

### Demographic

He said: "Education is at an all-time low in Walsall and we have not been able to improve it for years despite trying.

"In Blakenall especially it has a changing demographic and is great news for them."

However Walsall North MP David Winnick is not convinced by the plans and thinks the Government is trying to revert the UK's education system back towards grammar schools and the 11+ exams.

He said: "I have considerable doubts about whether free

### Report by Jack Averty

schools are the answer for an adequate education for all the children in the borough.

"Time will tell but it does seem to me that the present government wish to return to grammar schools and the old system of the 11+, which puts an unfair amount of pressure on children at a young age."

The new primary in Darlaston, which will be based off Slater Street and cater for more than 400 pupils, has been praised by local councillor Doug James.

He said: "We have a school places crisis locally and this has not been met by successive council administrations. Now we have a new Technology Primary on the way. This is good news for local children and families"

The new school in Blakenall will be run by the Windsor Academy Trust and have space for more than 900 pupils.

## Widower's heartbreak over theft of ring



Mr Bennett with a picture of his wife Irene who died last year

THIEVES targeted a great-grandfather in his own home stealing more than £3,000 and his late wife's wedding ring.

The callous distraction burglars struck in Streetly on Wednesday morning leaving 80-year-old Colin Bennett heartbroken when he realised what had happened.

Around 11am a man knocked the door at his address claiming he had been sent by the water board. Mr Bennett let him inside, leading him into the kitchen where the suspect carried out supposed inspections.

Little did he know at that point that a second person had sneaked into the property to raid the upstairs bedrooms.

His wife Irene passed away in June last year, aged 85. He said: "These people that do this sort of thing are the scum of the earth. I am usually sharp with these things. If people come to the door saying they are from a company, I say 'okay I'll ring them up now'. But on Wednesday I just went blank. I look at photos of my wife now and say 'I have let you down love'."

Mr Bennett had known Irene since he was a teenager and they were married for 57 years, having two sons Craig, aged 56, and Neil, aged 46, two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. He said she agreed to go out with him after he wrote to her while serving in the RAF.

"I know I will not get the money back but I am asking the two that done it to look at their conscience and return the wedding ring." Anyone with information can contact DC Ed Morgan at [eddie.morgan@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk](mailto:eddie.morgan@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk) or call the force on 101.



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2 CONTENTS

RHODES	6
LETTERS	7
TICKET	15
TV	18
PROPERTY	23
MOTORING	30
SPORT	35-36

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# Boat is sunk under a pile of rubble



The site of the Boat pub

THE end has come for a disused former pub after it was razed to the ground. The Boat, on Bentley Road South, Darlaston, which has been a target for arsonists and vandals since its closure in 2006, has been reduced to rubble in order to make way for redevelopment. Last year, the site was hit by four fires in a fortnight, prompting calls from fire bosses and local councillors to tear it down. Councillor Doug James, who represents the Darlaston area, said: "After many thousands of pints and happy hours, welcoming nights, some of the

best Real Ales the Black Country could offer, the Boat has finally sunk. "Let's see regeneration in Darlaston and get this area brought to life." During the course of 2005, it was named the best pub of the year by the Campaign for Real Ale's local branch but shut its doors a year later. It soon attracted a number of fly-tippers and one man was fined more than £10,000 during 2009 for dumping scrap metal and car parts at the site, as well as at another spot in Walsall. The borough council spent £3,700

clearing the rubbish before an unauthorised car cleaning operation moved onto the site. It was shut down as part of a council crackdown. This led to the firm obtaining permission to set up at the plot legitimately for a maximum of two years in 2010. While the bulldozers have come for The Boat, other pubs in the Darlaston area also face disappearing from the town's landscape forever. The Springhead Tavern in Walsall Road will be turned into eight flats under plans submitted to Walsall Council.

# Staff in online sex chat claims leave care firm

FOUR disgraced staff have left Caremark in the wake of allegations that workers were conducting online sex chats from their office.

The company, based at Green Lane, in Walsall, which provides home care services, confirmed one employee was sacked while three others had resigned during the investigation on the back of a national newspaper sting operation, last month. Kevin Lewis, chief executive of Caremark, said: "Caremark was so concerned about what had happened that we immediately sent a team in to carry out a full investigation. All four staff members involved have now left the business, three resigned during the investigation and one person was dismissed. "I am still shocked and appalled by this unacceptable behaviour. But we have remained committed to our top priority which is the care of our clients, which was never compromised, and we have been working closely with the CQC (Care Quality Commission) and the local authority (Walsall Council) throughout this process.

## Websites

"I take the professional conduct of all Caremark operations extremely seriously and my team acted swiftly and efficiently in holding those involved in this unfortunate and unpleasant incident to account." It was claimed employees were advertising their services through online escorting websites, charging punters nearly £2 a minute for lewd internet video chats. Footage showed two staff members posing topless whilst seemingly at work. Initially Caremark confirmed two suspensions had been made and issued reassurances that the company's clients had not been affected by the behaviour of the employees which was thought to have taken place in an administrative office. Walsall Council's health chief, Ian Robertson, had called for a swift resolution and welcomed the latest developments. He said: "It is great news. It was very important this was resolved as quickly as possible to give security for the people they look after. "How they managed to slip through the net in the first place needs to be looked at."

## Crowds bubble over at Sam's skills



SamSam Bubbleman performs in Walsall's Old Square to the delight of families. Picture by Jonathan Hipkiss

FAMILIES were blown away by the talents of a record-breaking bubble man who wowed crowds in Walsall town centre. Ten-time Guinness world record holder SamSam Bubbleman appeared at the Old Square precinct. He produced tiny bubbles, giant bubbles and bubbles in bubbles as the crowd who turned out for the shopping centre's Easter event were left in awe. The highlight of the day came when SamSam put two youngsters

inside an enormous bubble for his grand finale. Another highlight at the Easter event included a pair of Easter bunnies hopping around the shopping centre on stilts giving out chocolate eggs to youngsters. Free face-painting was also offered. Old Square manager Linda Brawn praised SamSam for being the 'perfect star attraction' for Old Square's annual Easter event. She said: "Children, parents and grandparents were transfixed

by SamSam's incredible show." SamSam, aka Sam Heath, has performed all over the world for many famous names including Prince Charles, JK Rowling, Michael Caine and Pulp frontman Jarvis Cocker. Amongst the Guinness world records he has broken over the last decade are creating the largest free-floating soap bubble, the most people inside a soap bubble and the largest frozen soap bubble. He also holds three Blue Peter badges.

# Fortnight sees more than 100 ops cancelled

MORE than 100 operations were cancelled at Walsall Manor Hospital in less than a fortnight. Health watchdogs have called for an investigation after raising concerns patients were subjected to additional anxiety and inconvenience - with some being told of cancellations at short notice. There were 114 non-urgent elective procedures cancelled between Monday, March 20, and Friday, March 31. Work preparing a new intensive treatment unit was also blamed for the postponements along with staff shortages.

Healthwatch Walsall has referred the matter to Walsall Council's health scrutiny group requesting members delve into the matter further. They have also issued an appeal to patients affected to get in touch and speak out about their experiences. Simon Fogell, chief officer for Healthwatch Walsall, said: "Most pre-planned elective surgery at the hospital was cancelled at the end of March and many of those affected were told only one or two weeks before. We have now received assurances from the trust that no-one's health was made worse by the delays." Amir Khan, trust medical director, said: "We would like to apologise to anyone affected by the cancellation of non-urgent surgery. We want to assure patients that such a decision is never taken lightly." Any patient wishing to get in touch to talk about a cancelled operation can email [info@healthwatchwalsall.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchwalsall.co.uk) or call 0800 470 1660.

# On the buses for improvements

IMPROVEMENTS to bus services have come into play in Rushall and Aldridge. As a result of the closure of Arriva's Wednesfield Garage, their Tamworth Garage takes over the operation of the 35 Walsall to Lichfield and 35A Walsall to Druids Heath serving Barns Lane, Rushall, and Aldridge Anchor Road, with the prospect of an improvement in service quality welcomed by ward councillor Richard Worrall. The changes will start from Sunday, with an improved evening service in place for each route. This has been made possible by a subsidy paid to the bus operator by councillor Worrall from his councillor's allowance. Councillor Worrall said: "The message to everyone, as always, is 'use it or lose it'."

# Ramblers take to the countryside

THE Walsall Group of the Ramblers will be heading to Priors Marston, near Southam, Warwickshire for a 10.5 mile circular walk on Sunday. Non-members are always welcome and can obtain more information from the walk leaders on 01922 692929.

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## Worker who stole firm's £1.5k told to pay it back

AN employee who stole £1,500 in cash meant for his company has been ordered to pay it back.

Andrew Charles, aged 51, from High Street, Bloxwich, worked for Fastcar, an automotive parts shop also located on High Street, in a role which involved travelling around the country and collecting money from customers.

On August 9, 2016, he travelled to Sheffield to collect numerous payments, totalling £1,500.

However, when he returned to Bloxwich, he told bosses that his car had been broken into and the money taken, along with a bag of his own.

CCTV footage later sourced by the company showed that he was driving back to his home at the time he alleged the break in took place.

When asked to come in and explain what had happened, Charles declined and was not seen again.

Charles had pleaded not guilty to one count of theft by employee on December 12, 2016 at Walsall Magistrates Court, before being convicted after trial on April 5.

During his sentencing at Walsall Magistrates Court, prosecutor David Devine said that Charles had four previous convictions for benefit fraud in 2015.

Charles was given a prison sentence of 84 days suspended for two years and ordered to carry out 150 hours unpaid work over the next year.

He was also ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £115, court costs of £600 and repay the £1,500.

## Firm's sweets and samosas

MORE than 1,000 samosas and sweets were handed out at a day of religious celebrations at home repairs company HomeServe in Walsall.

The firm, one of the borough's biggest employers, organised a day-long event in recognition of the work of hundreds of volunteers who have helped the Sikh group Midland Langar Seva Society and it coincided with the eve of the new year festival Vaisakhi.

Members of the group take food to the homeless every night, with providing food, or langar, being a principle of the Sikh faith. HomeServe is a regular contributor to the charitable society which helps to feed, clothe and support homeless and vulnerable people across the West Midlands.

## Roadworks delays set for two weeks

DRIVERS in Bloxwich have been warned to expect delays up until the end of April, as a road is closed for improvement works. Mossley Lane will be shut at the junction of the A4124 Sneyd Lane.

# Killer gets 40 years for second murder



Life – Sivan Amin

AN 'extraordinarily dangerous' killer from the West Midlands who stabbed a friend to death has been jailed for life with a minimum of 40 years. Sivan Amin, aged 37, knifed Mircea Gheorghe Cozmiuc more than 20 times after becoming jealous of his relationship with another man.

The court heard he had killed in similar circumstances while living in Sweden in 2008. The murder of Mr Cozmiuc, in Carter Road, Wolverhampton, came just two years after he had been released for the previous killing. Judge Melbourne Inman QC told Amin: "I am satisfied that you are singularly an extraordinarily dangerous man."

"You are only 37 but you've already murdered two people – and murdered them for reasons and in circumstances that are likely to recur throughout your life."

Amin, of Merridale Street West, who had given 23-year-old Mr Cozmiuc gifts, including a bracelet, said he loved him 'like a brother' but became increasingly angry after fellow Romanian Andrei Bourceanu moved into the house and began sharing a room. Amin called their relationship 'inappropriate'. After several rows, Amin was finally kicked out of the Carter Road house last June following a dispute over the rent during which he threatened to 'put a bul-

let through' his housemate's body. Amin posted homophobic messages on the photo-sharing service Instagram featuring pictures of the victim with Mr Bourceanu.

On September 3, Amin drove to Carter Road and launched a frenzied attack in the street as Mr Cozmiuc set off to go to work at Amazon in Rugeley just before 7am. He then drove home and, minutes later, used a friend's car to dump his blood-stained clothes. But the attack had been seen by a neighbour.

He had denied murdering Mr Cozmiuc. Judge Inman added: "This was a particularly savage and brutal attack."

# Secondary school places are short by nearly 200

**THERE are hundreds more applications for secondary school places in Walsall than the borough has space for.**

A total of 4,496 pupils have applied for Year 7 entry this autumn but there are only 3,719 places available according to figures obtained by a Freedom of Information request.

While 589 hopefuls came from outside of the borough, it still leaves 188 pupils living within Walsall applying for places who are set to miss out. Politicians have expressed concerns at the situation while some have pointed the finger at academies saying schools should be under the control of the local authority.

Walsall Councillor Chris Towse, who was children's services boss in 2015/16 under the previous administration, said: "You have got to consider things like population increases, but now fewer secondary schools are under the local authority control. Clearly children have got to be found a place, you can't have children not having a school."

### Academies

Walsall North Labour MP David Winnick also declared academies were part of the problem.

He added: "I do not think free schools and academies are the answer as there is no accountability. Schools should be run by the local authority."

Former council leader Mike Bird said that Barr Beacon School, rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted and where he is governor, typically receive twice the number of applicants than available places.

He stated all schools should be 'Good' or better in the borough to ensure children had a chance of sound education.

Walsall Council confirmed that as of March 1, the national secondary offer date, 74.5 per cent of children in the borough, whose parents submitted applications on time, were offered their first choice, while 94 per cent were offered one of their preferred schools.

The authority's website states: "We always try to meet a parent's first preference, but sometimes more applications for places are received than the school has places available. We are under a duty to offer your child a place in a school, and if we cannot meet any of your preferences, we will offer you a place in the nearest school with spaces available."



Sikh Vaisakhi celebrations taking place in Walsall town centre



A youngster gets a bird's eye view of the proceedings among the crowd

## Crowds celebrate Vaisakhi in Walsall

THOUSANDS of Sikh worshippers celebrated Vaisakhi with colourful processions through Walsall. Between 4,000 to 5,000 people were expected to take part in the procession marking the religious festival.

Worshippers turned the streets bright orange as they made their way from the Guru Nanak Gurdwara Sahib Walsall temple, on West Bromwich Street, to Nanaksar Gurdwara temple, on Wellington Street, and Pleck and Darbar Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji temple, on Rollingmill Street.

Drummers led the procession and they were followed by sword bearers, Khalsa flag bearers and a float carrying the Sikh holy book, the Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

Co-organiser, Amardeep Mahal, aged 25, from Walsall, said the day was about 'getting the community together and celebrating the birth of the Khalsa'.

She added: "It is also to converse the main concepts of Sikhism. Everyone is welcome regardless of where they come from or who they are. The procession was really good. Lucky the weather held off too."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Professor is new health group chief

A NEW chief officer has been appointed to Walsall's Clinical Commissioning Group.

Professor Simon Brake, who has more than 20 years' experience in health and social care, is to take on the role of chief officer. He will be in charge of the CCG's day-to-day operations, making sure it provides the best services possible for Walsall.

He said: "I'm delighted to be a part of NHS Walsall CCG. I am very much looking forward to working closely with colleagues, partners and local people across Walsall."

### Walking weekend taking in Chase

THE Walsall Group of the Ramblers is heading to Cannock Chase for its next summer short walk on Saturday.

The meeting point is the car park at Oak Park C. P. (Lichfield Road) at 9:30am.

The walk will be about 4 miles from the Glacial Boulder.

More information can be obtained from the walk leaders on 01922 637850. It is part of a programme of short Saturday walks that run fortnightly and are aimed at those who are either new to walking or haven't walked for a while.

### Volunteers want to run library

PEOPLE in the Rushall-Shelfield ward have come together to ask council bosses to consider allowing them to run their library on a volunteer basis.

Councillor Richard Worrall revealed a detailed Expression of Interest in a community takeover of Rushall Library had been submitted to the council. Meanwhile, Liberal Democrat leader Councillor Ian Shires has said that each library in Walsall faced with closure will be 'approached differently'.

### Baggies' Ben hopes to net shirt boost

BIDDING has begun on a shirt worn and signed by a Premier League star which is being auctioned by Albion goalkeeper Ben Foster. There have been 13 donations so far on a shirt signed by Manchester United's David de Gea.

Anyone who gives £10 will then go into a prize draw with the chance of winning the shirt. The Baggies number one is raising money for Care Leukaemia. People can donate at [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/benfosters](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/benfosters).

### St George's parade

A ST GEORGE'S Day event is being organised in Great Wyrley on Saturday. The parade, led by Cheslyn Hay Boys Brigade, will leave Harrison's Sports and Social Club at noon. The village's Royal British Legion branch will be selling burgers, hot dogs and pork baps in the club garden.

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COUNTY NEWS

Record-breaking start for airport

BIRMINGHAM Airport is celebrating a record-breaking start to spring after it handled tens of thousands of extra passengers last month.

New figures show 904,790 passengers passed through the airport in March, 73,000 more than in the same month in 2016, up by 8.9 per cent.

Both long and short haul services saw significant growth with long haul up by 8.3 per cent compared to the same month last year and short haul up by nine per cent. By the end of this year, it will have invested £450m on developing its infrastructure.

£1,000 donation for A&E charity

A PIONEERING accident and emergency charity with its HQ in Birmingham has received a £1,000 donation from a leading UK housebuilder to support its latest life-saving project.

Arrive Alive Response, which will provide first response vehicles to NHS services, hospices and air ambulance across the UK, has received the donation through Persimmon Homes Central Community Champions scheme, which gives away more than £700,000 across the UK each year. The charity has been leading the way with support programmes for almost 20 years.

DIY disasters costing £3,600

THE Midlands is the second most costly place for repairing DIY mistakes in the UK according to new research. People in the Midlands pay more than £3,600 on repairing their DIY disasters.

Only Londoners pay more and it is people in their 20s and 30s who appear to be particularly keen to take on risky tasks usually left to professionals with 19 per cent tackling electrical wiring and 13 per cent brave enough to attempt a house extension.

Candidate backs bus payment trial

LABOUR'S mayoral candidate for the West Midlands, Siôn Simon has welcomed the introduction of contactless payment on buses as he reiterated his pledge to freeze fares for a year.

The bus operator has begun a trial of contactless payment on services between Birmingham and Solihull, which could extend into the Black Country if successful.

It means passengers may no longer have to check they have the correct change before boarding.

Business awards

THE Black Country Chamber of Commerce has launched its 2017 awards to find the region's best businesses.

The number of awards have been increased and the winners will be announced at an awards dinner on November 17 at Wolverhampton Racecourse. Visit [www.blackcountry-chamber.co.uk](http://www.blackcountry-chamber.co.uk) for details.

It's go slow for drivers as city is hit by a swathe of roadworks

WOLVERHAMPTON has been named as one of the slowest cities in the UK for drivers – with council chiefs accused of ‘waging a war against motorists’.

Analysis by vehicle tracking firm Satrak ranked Wolverhampton fifth worst for the average driving speed, with motorists travelling at 14.79mph. It follows the announcement of an upcoming 18-month swathe of roadworks on the A449.

Conservative group leader Wendy Thompson has urged bosses to rethink proposals for the scheme between Junction 2 of the M54, at Fordhouses, and Springfield Lane. Bosses had described them as ‘short-term pain for long-term gain’.

But Councillor Thompson has accused the authority's Labour leadership of clogging up routes into the city which are vital for both workers and shoppers and costing businesses cash.

Labour cabinet member Milkinder Jaspal said she was ‘talking nonsense’.

Councillor Thompson added: “I can't believe the amount of roadworks that are going on. The amount of time some of them are taking is absolutely incredible. The cost for businesses must be enormous and the frustration for drivers as well.

Impression

“It is a war against motorists. We know roadworks need doing and development needs to take place. But all this work gives the impression of a lack of co-ordination and a lack of sympathy for motorists.”

The aim of the newly-announced project is to improve access to i54, the Wolverhampton Business Park, and the Junction 2 employment area.

It is expected to be funded by the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership ‘Local Growth Fund’.

Earlier this month work began in Newhampton Road West, Wolverhampton, to replace more than 1km of iron gas mains.

Other works are ongoing further south on the Stafford Road, in Wolverhampton city centre on Pipers Row, and on the Birmingham New Road near Coseley.

Councillor Jaspal said: “Saying we are waging war against motorists is a load of rubbish. We're making constant improvements to the roads and a lot of roadworks are also being done by utility companies and they are urgent work that needs to be done.”

Cambridge was ranked the slowest city in the UK in the figures, with average speeds of 13.73mph.

Potholes plague persists



WE asked readers to help us highlight some of our worst pothole-plagued roads – and you did not let us down.

In fact, the problem seems to be worse than we feared with some shocking pictures of crumbling roads arriving from across the Black Country and Staffordshire.

And it would appear, from the reports we are getting, that the problem is particularly severe across Staffordshire.

Motorist Paul Gill sent us this picture of Hill Top in Hednesford where fresh road markings have simply been painted over the potholes!

He said: “The potholes around Hednesford are ridiculous particularly ALL around the islands at Hill Top (Hill Street/Uxbridge Street) but amazingly instead of them being filled they get the lines painted through them! You can see just how deep this hole is by the dip in the white line.

Riddled

Andrew Kennerley sent us pictures of Carlisle Road on the Longford Estate which has been flagged up before by readers. He said: “I must say the surface of the Wellington Drive end of the road is completely breaking up.

I have tried reporting but when the council gets round to filling one, about three appear! It's one of the worst roads I know of in Cannock.”

This road was also highlighted by Sandra McLeod. She said: “The whole length of the road is riddled with very bad potholes and you cannot swerve past them in your car as residents park on the road nearly the whole length down one side mainly.”

Diane Clement was one of a number of readers who pointed out another stretch of road in Staffordshire which is a pothole hotspot – the A460



Two examples of the poor state of Carlisle Road in Cannock



Paul Gill's picture of Hill Top



Here are just three of the many potholes in High Street, Pattingham and they have been there for a long time



pictures above show. But the problem is not restricted to Staffordshire. We have already had a number of crumbling roads flagged up to us in Wolverhampton, Bloxwich and Kingwinford and now Sid Clegg has highlighted problems in Halesowen.

He said the ‘whole length of Richmond Street from Windsor School gate to the brow of the hill’ has potholes.

There may, however, be some relief on the way for Hednesford drivers with hopes of a road improvement scheme being carried out at Hill Top.

Hednesford and Rawsley county councillor George Adamson said the county council had agreed to put the long-awaited road improvement scheme at Hill Top into this year's

road improvements programme. The final programme is to be confirmed in the next few weeks. The scheme, at £225,000, includes resurfacing the junction and approximately 50 metres of the approaches to it. Councillor Adamson said: “Local people have been asking for this work to be done for a long time.”

The Chronicle wants to identify the top 10 pothole blackspots in the region to flag up to our councils. If you know of any pothole-ridden routes or deep holes email details, preferably with a picture, your name and any comments you would like to make to [Sue.Attwater@expressandstar.co.uk](mailto:Sue.Attwater@expressandstar.co.uk) or drop us a line at Editorial, The Chronicles, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

Streets ahead as candidate back on track for superprix

MAYORAL candidate Andy Street has revealed plans to attract Channel 4 to the West Midlands and bring back Birmingham Superprix racing.

The creation of a ‘digital skills institute’ and a new graduate retention programme are included in proposals by Mr Street to help the region attract 29,000 new technology jobs.

The Conservative candidate said: “Digital is vital to the continued success of the West Midlands economy because it is the golden thread across all the industries which will provide jobs in the 21st century and forms a key part of the bid to bring Channel 4 to the region.

“While I led John Lewis, we went from 12 per cent orders online to over 50 per cent during the last Christmas period. We needed to innovate to keep up with the needs of our customers.

“The Mayor needs to lead the charge to bring digital skills and digital jobs to the West Midlands. We need someone who has the necessary experience and skills to make it the digital revolution success for the West Midlands.”

A consultation is taking place into whether Channel 4 should relocate outside of London. Mr Street also welcomed new laws which will help support his vision for a revival of the Birmingham Superprix.

He has highlighted the idea of a new version of the Superprix, focused on the new generation of electric vehicles, in his manifesto. The original Superprix ran in Birmingham from 1986 to 1990.

Region has the most dangerous roads in Britain

THE West Midlands has the most dangerous roads in the country, according to official figures.

There were 37,153 people hurt or killed in the region between 2011 and 2015 – making it the most lethal area to drive a car in the country.

But residents are less likely to be a casualty in a road accident with just one in 155 likely to be hurt or killed on the road. The analysis from government statistics, gathered by Witter Towbars, revealed that Staffordshire was the 16th most dangerous part of the country to travel through by car with 19,577 people hurt or killed over the period.

But one in 56 people were likely to be involved in a serious collision, the research shows based on population.

The most dangerous stretches of road had 30mph speed limits – making up 57 per cent of all accidents that led to injury or death. The next most dangerous was 60mph, followed by 40mph zones.

The data suggests that drivers are odds-on to crash on a Thursday – and least likely on Mondays – according to the figures.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Pupils' challenge just the business

HUNDREDS of budding young entrepreneurs from Walsall primary school pupils teamed up to find the best business ideas in an annual challenge event.

Teams from Cooper and Jordan, Leighswood, Whetstone Field, Rushall, Radleys Blackwood, St Michael's schools were challenged to produce business ideas and then present their business plans before a panel of judges.

Each team of primary pupils was helped by students from Aldridge School, in Tynings Lane, who acted as business ambassadors.

Aldridge School Primary Challenge was organized by Education Business

Time to stay and play at museum

YOUNG children are being encouraged to stay and play at Wednesbury Museum and Art Gallery.

Museum staff are launching new weekly activity sessions for pre-school children at the attraction in Holyhead Road.

Parents, carers and little ones can enjoy a wide range of activities and games. Each session will be led by the venue's skilled and enthusiastic staff and involve arts and crafts, story time, singing, and a wide variety of toys and games.

Sessions are £2 per child, and run every Wednesday from 10am until 12 noon from Wednesday April 26.

Joel fundraising run countdown

REGISTRATION for a charity fun run has now opened.

The second Run for Joel event – in memory of Tunisia terror attack victims Joel Richards, his uncle Adrian Evans and grandfather Patrick Evans – takes place in September and it has been open to entries from last Friday. Organisers have announced that registration for the run on Sunday, September 10 opens at 9am.

To enter visit smileforjoel.com and click on the 'events' page.

Sailing ahead with plans to mark 50th

A SAILING club will mark a year of celebrations for its 50th anniversary with an open day this month.

Aldridge Sailing Club will allow members of the public to try sailing for free at the open day on Sunday.

The club, based on Barns Lane, will be open between 11am to 4pm on the day.

Appeal for relatives

RELATIVES of a man who died recently are being traced by the coroner's office. Ian Lusty, from Willenhall, died aged 64 on April 6. He was born on September 30, 1952. Relatives of Mr Lusty should contact Elaine Huckfield on 0121 569 7200.

Councillors pay freeze is backed at meeting

COUNCILLORS on Walsall Council agreed to have their pay frozen on Monday as plans to introduce 'cabinet support members' were thrown out.

The 58 councillors were asked at their full council meeting to consent to a freeze on their pay in line with employees at the council who have already agreed to the move.

The proposal was described as 'only fair' by the authority's leader Councillor Sean Coughlan as he battles to find £86 million of savings by 2020.

The councillors were not able to accept a freeze at the same time as council staff as their allowances need to be discussed through an independent remuneration panel.

The panel has also presented options for four 'cabinet support members' to receive an extra £3,462 each as a special responsibility allowance (SRA), which councillor Coughlan said he would not be proceeding with at the meeting.

Councillor Coughlan said: "I believe, as I am sure everyone here does, that it is only fair we have a pay freeze. In terms of the cabinet support members, I have been in politics long enough to know when to back down and it is clear that tonight the proposals for cabinet support members will not get the support to be brought forward."

However, councillor Mike Bird, the Conservative opposition leader, called them 'non-jobs' and said he didn't believe the workload taken on by some cabinet members meant they should be allowed a new support member.

CCTV released by investigators

POLICE in Walsall are investigating an alleged incident of voyeurism in the town centre. Officers from West Midlands Police want to speak to the man pictured in relation to the alleged incident, which took place at the Saddlers Centre on March 18. However the force insists it is keeping an 'open mind' regarding the man's involvement.



**The CCTV image** A spokesman said: "Officers investigating the allegation are keeping an open mind, but at present want to trace this man to either eliminate him from the investigation, or check whether he has any vital information about what happened."

"Anyone who recognises the man or has information about his whereabouts is asked to contact DC Paul Morris p.morris@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk. If you don't want to speak directly to the police you can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111. Please quote crime number 20WS/58000A/17."

Library closure 'a slap in the face'



The village centre with the library inside

A COUNCILLOR has called the projected closure of his local library 'a slap in the face'.

Pelsall Library is one of a number across the borough set to close under cost-cutting measures, however, councillor Gary Perry has said that he believes there is sufficient interest in the community to keep it open on a volunteer-run basis. Speaking at a Walsall Council full council meeting, councillor Perry handed over a 3,082-signature petition to bosses calling on the authority to consider keeping it open.

However, he said that there seems to be an interest in looking to use the site on Pelsall Village Centre for a book exchange. Speaking at the meeting, councillor Perry said: "I don't intend to debate the pros and cons of closing our library."

"Since the announcement that Pelsall library would be affected by these closures, I have had meetings with community groups looking to take over the site on a voluntary basis. What we are being told is that there are plans in place to turn the library into a book exchange. Libraries are

not just a place to get a book out, they offer respite for people in our community and a chance for people to talk on a level they otherwise don't get the chance to do. The idea of allowing a book exchange to be put in place instead of allowing volunteers to run the site as it was before is a slap in the face."

As well as being a fairly new library which was opened at vast expense to the council, Pelsall residents also argue that the library's visitor figures are the highest in the borough apart from the main library.

Council boss: 'Things could be much worse'

RESIDENTS who have signed a petition calling on a Black Country council to campaign against Central Government over cuts have been told 'things could be much worse'.

At a full meeting of Walsall Council, a 2,340 signature petition calling on the authority to 'Save Our Services' was presented to bosses, with Walsall Against Cuts member Andy Summers giving an impassioned speech to a packed house.

During the speech, he asked councillors to 'stop doing the Government's dirty work', which he says affects Walsall's most disadvantaged people.

Mr Summers said: "Our petition relates to years of extreme council cuts that have affected everyone in Walsall. I know that none of you got into local government to make these cuts and do the Government's dirty work, so we ask that you represent us against these extreme actions."

Remain

Cuts have forced Walsall Council to budget for £86 million in savings over the next four years. Originally, the council proposed to shut 15 of the borough's 16 libraries, leaving just Central Library on Lichfield Street open which would also incorporate the leather museum and local history centre.

However, six of the 15 at risk libraries are now to remain open, with the leather museum also staying put. Aldridge, Bloxwich, Brownhills, Darlaston and Willenhall libraries have all been saved, while Streety library will be community run. Beechdale, Blakenall, New Invention (Willenhall), Pelsall, Pheasey, Pleck, Rushall, South Walsall and Walsall Wood libraries will all close during the 2017/18 financial years.

Council leader Sean Coughlan, said: "Of course it is important that people have their say. However, I have said from the beginning that we have to set a legally balanced budget and that is what we have done."

"Things could actually be much worse, I have seen it myself, where the council has been put into special measures. If that happens as the result of us not setting a balanced budget, Government will do that again and they will cut services without a care and without the consultation that has been crucial to our process."

Legend of leather museum dies



Ron Hawkins, seen with a hide at the museum

TRIBUTES have been paid to Ron Hawkins – a volunteer at Walsall Leather Museum for nearly 30 years and RAF veteran – who has died aged 91.

Born in Walsall in 1925, the former RAF telegrapher, began working in the leather trade as a currier at ET Holden in Park Street in February 1940. After starting in warehousing, he quickly showed an aptitude for the craft and became an apprentice.

Eventually he was called up and joined the RAF and became a high



A young Ron seen during his time in the ATC

speed telegrapher. After more than 77 years in the leather trade, he finally hung up his famous white coat and called a day just after his 90th birthday.

He died on March 31. Mr Hawkins was immensely proud of his time in the Forces and often talked of his experiences in later years, said friends.

After the war had ended, Mr Hawkins returned to Holden's and completed his training to become a master currier and assistant manager until the firm relocated

to Scotland. Whilst Holden's were keen for Ron to go with them, he and his wife Muriel and his children Tony and Diane decided to remain in Walsall.

Many other local curriers were keen to secure his skills and finally Ron decided to work at J & E Sedgwick in Reservoir Place where he remained until his retirement. Francesca Cox, assistant curator at the museum, said: "He was completely passionate about the leather museum. When he left we were really sad to see him go."

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## IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



# Now I have to apply for imaginary tax disc!

BENJAMIN Franklin famously said: "In this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes," but even so, I was a bit surprised to get a reminder for my car tax last week.

The reason being that my car reached its 40th birthday in May last year, meaning it should be exempt from road tax.

The DVLA no longer provides a telephone number on the renewal form to help with these queries – nobody seems to want to talk over the phone any more, everything has to be online – but after a bit of perseverance I eventually found the number.

After a quarter of an hour on hold, somebody eventually explained that I would have to go into a Post Office with all the documents, apply for a new log book, and when it comes back I will then be able to apply for an imaginary tax disc which will be issued free of charge.

AND I thought the idea of computers was to cut bureaucracy.

□ □ □

DO politicians ever learn? Exactly a year since the Government spent £9 million on leaflets telling us why we should vote to stay in the EU, they're at it again.

Last week glossy leaflets dropped through the letterbox telling us all about next month's election for a West Midlands mayor, or "Greater Birmingham" as they really see it, even if they won't say so. A battlebus is also touring the region, telling us why we should all turn out to vote.

Well, I'm sorry, but I will be making a point of not voting. As a dyed-in-the-wool Black Country mon I feel no affinity whatsoever with Birmingham, Coventry or Solihull. As far as I'm concerned, Birmingham – where the power will ultimately rest – is just as alien and remote as Westminster, and I'm heartily sick of the perception that anywhere between Warwick and Stoke is essentially a suburb of the second city.

Perhaps if the powers that be are really serious about devolving power to local communities, it might not be a bad idea asking them what they are before imposing it?

□ □ □

A NEW study shows that parents in the West Midlands are prepared to pay a £52,000 premium to live close to a school with an "outstanding" Ofsted inspection. PERHAPS that should not come as too much of a surprise. Most parents will want the best for their children, and you can't put a price on education, although I do wonder what happens to house prices when the schools are put into special measures a few years later.

## What pupils need is a dollop of commitment



Jeremy Corbyn aims to slap 20 per cent VAT on private-school fees



Victoria Coren Mitchell's fiendishly difficult quiz show has now been dis-connected



Jon Platt, the dad who dared to take his daughter to Florida in term time

# Teaching is not a free portion of pie

NOT sure about Jeremy Corbyn's plan to slap 20 per cent VAT on private-school fees and use the money to provide free lunches for kids in the state sector. Some parents scrimp and save to send their children to independent schools and probably have less disposable income than the parents of the kids Corbyn wants to feed. In any case, the real factor in teaching children is not a free portion of shepherd's pie, but a dollop of commitment. The kids who do well at school, whether public or state, are the ones who come from families or cultures where education is seen as a great gift.

THE latest Supreme Court ruling says you can't take kids out of school for term-time holidays but you can remove them for "religious observance." I am delighted to launch The Church of the Blessed Walt. A strict requirement of this faith is a two-week pilgrimage each year, in term time, to The Sacred Towers of Eurodisney.

NOW that the judges have come down like a ton of wigs on Jon Platt, the dad who dared to take his daughter to Florida in term time, can we expect a similar crusade against those traveller and gypsy families whose kids drift in and out of education, racking up some of the worst literacy and health levels in the Western world? Thought not.

TERMS for our time. Until this week I had never heard of pop-up brothels. Apparently they are set up for a few days or weeks in houses or flats hired from unwitting landlords, sometimes under the Airbnb system. And you thought that lovely American lady was taking Bible classes?

ANYWAY, I dare say pop-up brothels serve a certain sector of society. But as the babyboomers grow older and the whole UK population ages, where are the pop-up chiropractors, the pop-up bingo parlours and the pop-up den-

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ture repairers? Knock three times and ask for Steradent.

A REPORT by the Police Superintendents' Association claims that 24-hour drinking, introduced by relaxing licensing laws in 2003, has led to a massive increase in alcohol-related crime in the early hours. Meanwhile, another report shows that throwing petrol on a fire does not extinguish it, and that bears, after a heavy meal, often head for forested areas.

GARDENER'S World has been extended to one hour on BBC2, swallowing the slot formerly held by Victoria Coren Mitchell's fiendishly difficult quiz show, Only Connect. After many weeks of being made to feel stupid in your own home, you will now be made to feel inadequate in your own garden.

AS you may have gathered, I firmly believe the population is divided not so much socially or politically but between two ancient and irreconcilable tribes: the optimists and the pessimists. So I am grateful to a new radio series, Glass Half Full (R4), for showing us that it is entirely possible for one clever doctor to be wildly optimistic about the future of personalised, gene-driven medicine, while the equally clever doctor next to him is deeply depressed about the coming global pandemic which will wipe out about one-fifth of humanity.

ORDER, order! The House of Lords has entered the row over television dramas with some peers complaining about 'mumbling' ac-

tors. Talk about pot and kettle. Have you ever watched and heard the House of Lords on telly? It is Mumbleland.

THE one thing everybody knows is that the Famous Five washed down their grub with 'lashings of ginger beer'. The truth, however, is that this classic phrase appears nowhere in Blyton's adventures.

FOR as long as I can remember, the experts have been predicting the return of the airship. How many times have we seen artists' impressions of giant silver slugs cruising over the clouds? Truth to report, I've only ever seen one in real life. Latest into the ring is an African-based company which is now promising to bring together US airship technology with vast reserves of helium gas in Tanzania. So that's blimps and squeaky voices.

IN the old days, airships were filled with highly inflammable hydrogen which produced some terrible disasters, notably the destruction of the Hindenburg at New Jersey in 1937. Helium is much safer. Helium is inert but hydrogen is ert. Very ert.

I'M not sure how the latest diesel-compensation scheme is expected to work. Encouraged by the Labour Government, millions of drivers bought diesel vehicles in the belief that they would save the planet from carbon dioxide. We are now told they kill 40,000 people a year through nitrogen dioxide pollution. Some cities are now proposing a 'toxins tax', to be paid by any diesel driver entering their patch. But Theresa May seems to be hinting that drivers may be offered financial help, but has not gone into any detail. The silliest possible solution, of course, would be for local council officials to tax motorists and Whitehall officials to hand the money back. So that couldn't happen...

## TALKING POINT



# The lowlife fly-tippers need to be binned off

FLY-TIPPERS are thoughtless near-dethals who must be pursued by the authorities with unrivalled vigour and forced to pay eye-wateringly high fines.

But I can't help wondering why fly-tipping is increasingly on such a rapid scale. It's becoming an epidemic.

How can there be so much rubbish dumped in these modern times when we are also supposed to be more environmentally aware, resolutely adhering to strict recycling rules, following our dogs around with plastic bags and reducing our carbon footprints to a toe prints?

Yet still our countryside and open spaces are being littered with everything from fridges, to mattresses with stinking big lorries pulling up and dumping their load.

Is there a Mr Big co-ordinating organised fly-tipping across the region? Or are there other factors which are leading the more moronic individuals in society to abandon legitimate means of waste disposal to dump their rubbish on any secluded spot of land they can find?

For example, the fact that many of our tips have had their opening hours reduced. Worryingly, there are discussions already under way to close sites in the Dudley and Wolverhampton boroughs to make way for new super tips. In Staffordshire, charges have recently been introduced at the tips for such items as tyres, soil and plasterboard.

On top of that collections are increasingly being reduced to fortnightly by councils, though we aren't getting bigger bins, and heaven forbid your whee bin should go walkabout because that is going to cost you!

Meanwhile we live in fear of bin-spectors who 'tag' our bins should a stray item appear in the wrong bin. I have had that walk of shame as I arrived home to see a red tag applied to my bin and the threatening letter warning that it will not be collected.

Thousands and thousands of pounds are spent by councils cleaning up after fly-tippers. How many staff hours must be cut or charges – £4.80 per tyre – collected for councils to come close to meeting these bills?

Clearly councils are not to blame for fly-tipping – that's down to the lowlife who think it is ok to litter our countryside with their unwanted tat – but the authorities are not helping and may well be making matters worse.

We law-abiding citizens pay our council tax and expect the tips to be open. We don't want to be hammered with additional charges. But we are losing out while our money is spent cleaning up after these lowlives.

Councils need to think how their cut-backs are adding to the problem. And it would be nice if the courts that deal with these mindless litterbugs hit them with breathtakingly high fines that could help meet the cost of keeping our tips open!

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# UK was conned into joining with Europe

WHILST agreeing with the sentiments of Mr R Griffiths (March 30) that the Scots should remain in the union, I have issues with some of his comments.

I fail to understand why he thinks it is an 'obvious mess' to undertake the Brexit negotiations. The United Kingdom existed as a successful trading nation before we were 'conned' into joining what was to be a 'Common Market'. We dealt with Europe and our friends in the Commonwealth without any serious issues. Before our acceptance, our French neighbours had in

fact blocked our admission for about 10 years.

The tie up has indeed given us many benefits in law and regulation as well as a few ridiculous 'bent banana' type edicts! However, as I have said to many people, 'would you invest in a company, bank or building society that has not published an audit for years?'.

As for the rebellious Mrs Sturgeon and her cohorts it is time to point out the difficulty of them supporting their own independence. The first minister is posturing like the capercaillie for since shipbuilding has now gone and

the oil has run out, I am unable to see how they could exist outside the union. Scots are not charged for prescriptions or tuition fees, but these are not free, but they are paid for by the taxpayers of the rest of the union!

I am not anti-Scot and have Scottish friends and admire many of their great men like Scott, Carnegie and Balfour as well as the great and brave Scottish regiments but we as a nation have always honoured the result of elections and referendum.

**JOHN CHAMBERLAIN**  
Great Barr

## Corbyn is on the side of workers

IN reply to Keith Sheldon (March 29) the Labour Party implied by its name, that it was somehow in favour of those who had only their labour power to sell.

Blair changed the name of the party and its aim. Under the guise of modernisation, Clause Four, a commitment to public ownership of the means of production, in other words socialism, was discarded.

New Labour was a rabid supporter of capitalism and when both the City and the Tories demanded deregulation of the banking industry, Brown readily agreed, hence the great banking crash. Ironically Brown was then ordered to temporarily nationalise banks. But capital tied of New Labour and had no further use for it.

Corbyn took over the party by the bizarre method of allowing its members to choose their leader. He inherited a party with neither name, nor aim. He has tripled the membership and wiped out its massive debts. He faces attack from every angle, but remains steadfast in changing the party into one that serves the real interests of the working class.

**MR T R MILLWARD**  
Chasetown

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### POST

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51-53 Queen Street  
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

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## May's slant on terror in letter 'appalling'

ONLY days after the horrific attack on innocents on Westminster Bridge, London, which led to the loss of five lives, Prime Minister Theresa May insulted the very professional services that keep us safe and that require international networks to be effective.

We will always remember the bravery and kindness of those remarkable heroes who assisted the injured and fallen on that tragic day.

Mrs May's repeated connecting of security and trade in her letter triggering Article 50 does not show her in a good light. Threatening to withdraw help to fight terrorism across Europe in a bid to extract good trade terms is simply appalling.

Cooperation is vital to

prevent and track down the perpetrators of such acts of callous violence.

In the years to come, no matter the outcomes of negotiations on a Brexit deal, history may not look on Mrs May as a benevolent or wise leader because of her insensitive and foolhardy bargaining gambits.

On this matter and her failure to defend the rights of over three million Europeans living and working in the UK as a matter of principle, she will be held on a lower list of PMs. By promoting cooperation instead of sharp practice at the outset of negotiations Mrs May would have gained a important advantage.

**CLLR DOUG JAMES**  
Walsall

## Heritage in spotlight

RE: Foreign is historical terminology, April 6 letters. Shall we cut K Watkins' discourse short. I have read better from the BNP.

I do not support Councillor Eileen Russell of St Matthews. As for K Watkins, whose surname means that she is of Welsh descent, I take issue with her claim to be talking from a Black Country heritage, which Darlaston typifies. K Watkins claims that the word 'foreign' is a typical way of talking. It may be... but it scarcely dignifies a sorry episode, nor excuses it.

**GRAEME CONNIGALE**  
Palfrey

## Token of shop appreciation

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# Murder plot straight out of drama as man jailed

IT could have been a scene straight out of a gritty US TV drama – secret talks with a private investigator in California and the offer of \$30,000 to have an ex-wife murdered.

But this was real life and the man in the leading role was from the Black Country and William Wallace was jailed for nine years in the US.

The father, originally from Walsall, had been involved in a custody battle with his ex-wife in 2013 over their four-year-old daughter when decided it was time to put her out of the picture. He was not prepared to kill her himself – but he was ready to pay \$30,000 to hire a hitman.

Wallace, aged 36, who lived on the Yew Tree Estate before moving to Santa Ana, California, 40 miles south of Los Angeles, had initially hired a private investigator to find dirt on his wife in a bid to make her look bad in court and swing proceedings in his favour. But he then decided to go a step further.

Wallace asked his private investigator if he knew anyone who would kill her and dispose of her body, US prosecutors said. He requested the murder take

**By Richard Guttridge**

place after December 23 when he would be back in the West Midlands for a Christmas visit – putting plenty of distance between himself and the crime.

The horrified investigator reported Wallace's plan to police and detectives decided they would set up the scheming father, which would prove his downfall.

Wallace met with the undercover detective and offered to pay the five-figure sum to have it done.

He even produced a photograph of his former flame, who was originally from Sussex and has not been named. Wallace was arrested by police. He was jailed after admitting attempted murder and two counts of solicitation to commit murder.

## Gates set to open on new free school



The site of the new free school for Darlaston

JUSTINE Greening Minister for Education has confirmed a new Free school will be opened in Darlaston.

Once of the driving forces behind highlighting the crisis in local schools, Councillor Doug James, said he was delighted with the news.

He said: "I welcome the exciting news that Sir Mark Grundy's team will be leading this new school initiative, he is a first class educationalist and innovator in education."

The school will be called Darlaston Technology Primary. Councillor James added: "Successive council administrations have let the people of Darlaston down with poor planning and under-investment in our school places.

"We now have an exciting opportunity to move our choices forward for our local children. Bringing a technological approach to our classrooms is much-needed and will prepare our young pupils for a modern inclusive approach to learning and skills."

It will be built on the site of the former Slater Street School which was closed and demolished. The new free school model will have 415 places and 25 private places.



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# Healthcare team set up to help clear wards

A NEW team of healthcare staff are looking to help avoid unnecessary hospital admission and speed up hospital discharges by offering care at home.

Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust's clinical intervention team provide assessment, diagnosis and treatment for deep vein thrombosis, as well as intravenous therapy for infections including cellulitis, osteomyelitis and chest infections.

Based at both Hollybank House in Willenhall, and Beechdale Health Centre in Walsall the team sees up to 175 adult referrals a month on an appointment basis, from hospitals, GP surgeries and Urgent Care Centres.

This includes on average 145 DVT referrals and around 30 referrals for IV therapy.

## Holistic

The team of eight, led by Dr Simon Harlin, has the skills to carry out holistic assessments of patients and appropriate treatment.

"We aim to see all new referrals the same day, unless the patient can't attend clinic or if our capacity is limited we will see the patient the next day with the approval of the referring clinician," Leon Talbot, team lead explained.

"We don't delay treatment. We are a community-based service and manage both acute unplanned care and planned referrals from secondary care. We always have to be ready for referrals."

"We have a dedicated co-ordinator, whose role it is to man the phones, accept referrals, advise on a IV antibiotic treatment plan with the referrer, putting the pathways in place, as well as reviewing blood results and organising scans."



The clinical intervention team based at Hollybank House in Willenhall

## Award for good Samaritan

A GOOD Samaritan has been given an award after saving a pensioner's life.

Craig Wilson, aged 34, from Aldridge, saved the life of Jessie Crook, 70, from Pelsall, after she slipped into freezing water while dog walking on Pelsall Common and was unable to move after twisting her leg.

Mr Wilson spotted Mrs Crook as he was driving home and stopped his car to help. The pair were reunited in Walsall last week at the Mayor's parlour as the mayor herself, Councillor Kath

Phillips, presented Mr Wilson with a good citizen award. She had wanted to meet the pair after reading about the story on Facebook.

Councillor Phillips said: "It's been really lovely to have Craig and Jessie here in the parlour."

Mrs Crook, who is said to be recovering well, attended the parlour with her husband Michael while Mr Wilson came with his wife Alex, two-year-old daughter Sofia and one year old twins Penny and Hope.

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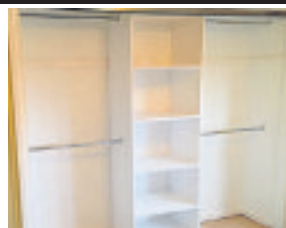
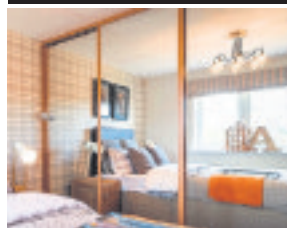
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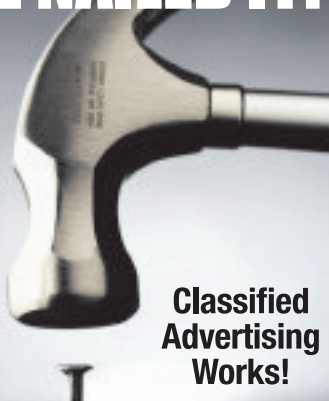
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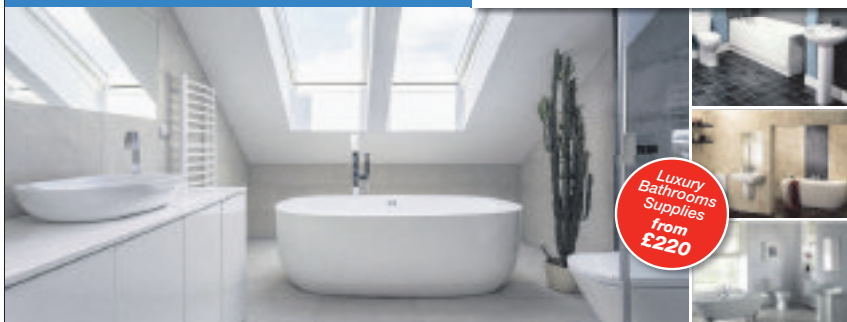


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## Driver flees after lamp post crash



The aftermath of the crash

A CAR smashed into a lamp post in the early hours with the driver fleeing the scene by the time emergency services arrived.

Firefighters were called to Owen Road in Willenhall around 1.15am on Saturday.

Two crews, one from Willenhall and another from Bilston, attended to make the scene safe.

The white hatchback was left severely damaged by the smash.

Willenhall Fire Station posted a picture of the aftermath on social media

which showed the bumper falling off the front of the car which had seemingly come to rest against a tree, while one of the front wheels appeared to have been ripped off.

Behind the vehicle a long metal pole, which appeared to be the remains of the lamp post, lay across the road.

A West Midlands Fire Service spokeswoman said: "We were called at 1.15am to a RTC involving a vehicle in collision with a lamp post."

"The driver had left the scene prior to our arrival."

## Father of two took own life after being arrested by police

**A FATHER of two hanged himself after being arrested by police, an inquest has been told.**

Gary Slater, aged 48, from Walsall, was found by his sister after being arrested by West Midlands Police on April 3.

He had confessed to the crimes, which were not revealed at the inquest at the Black Country Coroner's Court, earlier in the day and been released pending further forensic investigation.

However he was found dead later the same day. After his arrest he was taken to his Walsall home by West Midlands Police and when he arrived his wife, Nicole, left to stay in a local hotel.

Assistant coroner David Urpeth, who was presiding over Monday's hearing, explained how after his wife had left, Mr Slater went to visit his mum and sister and then his two daughters, aged 17 and 19.

Mr Urpeth added: "He said goodbye to everyone and then went home and hung himself, leaving notes. Mrs Slater had been worried about her husband and asked his sister to go round and check on him, which is when he was found hanging."

### Confessing

She sobbed throughout the inquest, briefly giving evidence to confirm that she thought her husband had killed himself on purpose. Mr Slater had told West Midlands Police that he was 'fine' and 'fit to go' after confessing to the crimes but was given self-harm advice and handed a suicide prevention pack.

The inquest was told that due to the recent police contact before Mr Slater's death, West Midlands Police had referred itself to the Independent Police Complaints Commission. The commission recommended the force carry out an internal inquiry, which found no wrongdoing.

Mr Urpeth said: "I am satisfied beyond all reasonable doubt that the appropriate conclusion is suicide. That is tragic for him and for all those he leaves behind. I would like to offer my condolences to his family."

A statement from West Midlands Police said: "A man was arrested on 3 April from his home address in Walsall after officers executed a search warrant. He was taken into West Midlands Police custody for questioning and later released. Officers returned the 48-year-old to his home address and welfare issues were addressed. Police were made aware by ambulance colleagues that the man had been found dead at home later that day; it's suspected he took his own life. The matter was referred to the IPCC as a matter of course."

## Cute kittens recovering well



Newborn kittens recovering after being rescued from Walsall factory

THREE newborn kittens are recovering after they were found close to death.

The kittens, then two days old, were found in a storage cupboard at a factory in Walsall Enterprise Park, in Regal Drive. It is thought that they were born to a feral cat who possibly abandoned them. When RSPCA animal collection officer Catherine Strawford arrived, they were still wet from the birth, stone cold and not moving. One had sadly died.

Mrs Strawford said: "It was so sad to see them so close to death but the surviving three are pulling

through and they have become very lively. It is a terrible start to their lives but I have every faith they will keep getting stronger and stronger, and one day will be able to be rehomed."

"They are so cute and I can't stop taking photos and video of them."

The surviving kittens – a female, who has been named Rose, and two males, named Percy and Max – are now being hand-reared by Catherine and her family.

To help the RSPCA look after animals like Rose, Percy and Max, text LOVE to 87023 to give £3 or visit [www.rspca.org.uk/give](http://www.rspca.org.uk/give).

## New life for derelict pub site with scheme for six-bedroomed home

A DERELICT pub targeted by vandals is poised to be transformed into a six-bedroom house under new plans. Just last week, a planning application to tear down the Sneyd Inn on Vernon Way, Bloxwich, and replace it with 21 homes was withdrawn by developers.

However, new plans to utilise the site as a 'six bedroom dwelling' after it closed for business last year, have been recommended for approval by planning officers at Walsall Council.

A report attached to the planning application reads: "Currently the derelict nature of the site has meant

the site has been used for dumping grounds and not befitting for the green belt locality of the site."

"It has been reported recently that there have been a number of car thefts and fires on the site due to it being a hotspot for youngsters to congregate and gather on the premises."

"The open and unmaintained nature of the site allows this to continue and will only increase the damage to the site."

The pub was put up for sale in 2015, however no interest had been registered in purchasing the site until the previous application to flatten the site

and build homes was submitted in May 2016. Before its closure, the pub was hit by a spate of burglaries, with the site being targeted five times in six months in 2011.

A number of pubs in the Bloxwich area have been closed and become a target for vandals in recent years. In particular, the state of the former Leathern Bottle and Eagle pub sites in Creswell Crescent have long been an issue with Walsall MP David Winnick.

Developer SEP Properties has recently applied to build 17 flats on the site of The Eagle, which had travellers set up camp outside in November.



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"My child has been happy and flourished both in her education, social skills and confidence."

A spokesman for the school said: "At Queen Mary's High School, we take the individual needs of our students very seriously, both in their academic work and also in a variety of other ways."

"Lessons are designed to ensure that each student is challenged at the appropriate level as well as to provide opportunities for developing teamwork, leadership, cooperation, listening and a



Girls from Year Seven at Queen Mary's High School visit Whitemoor Lakes

variety of other skills. The key element for success is enjoyment and you see plenty of that here at Queen Mary's High School.

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# Darren dips in with new angle to help youngsters

A FORMER police officer has spoken of his pride after reeling thousands of youngsters away from a life of crime by getting them hooked on fishing.

The Fishing Academy charity - which was the brainchild of Darren Robbins from West Midlands Police - runs an angling and education programme.

It was set up for young people at risk of getting caught up in anti-social behaviour or exclusion from school.

Just two per cent of schoolchildren have broken their contract of good behaviour after attending the programme; with some going on to work in the fishing industry and waterways as a result of what they learned.

The scheme was initially started by Darren with just a handful of unruly youths from Brownhills in 2004.

## Funding

Darren, who was a Pc for 30 years and is now a staff member at West Midlands Police, said: "It is hard to believe how the programme has grown; it started off with myself working with a small group who were involved in anti-social behaviour in Brownhills."

"I then got a bit of funding from the police, council and Environment Agency to establish this site and now we have a purpose-built facility."

The initiative was immediately successful in encouraging secondary school pupils to develop new skills.

This led to the launch of the Fishing Academy which now works alongside up to 30 schools in the West Midlands to offer support and guidance to young people - mainly aged between 12 and 16. The Academy, based in Abbots Bromley in Staffordshire, has a fishing lake and classrooms for mentoring and education purposes.



Youngsters seen enjoying fishing at the Abbot's Bromley site

## Fears on 700 Jaeger jobs

FASHION chain Jaeger has collapsed into administration, putting nearly 700 high street jobs at risk. There are more than 100 stores and concessions across the country, including a local outlet at Boundary Mill in Walsall.

The group's directors have appointed AlixPartners to oversee the process following failed attempts by the company's private equity owner, Better Capital, to sell the struggling business. Jaeger - which employs around 680 staff across 46 stores, 63

concessions, its London head office and a logistics centre in Kings Lynn - had been on the market for around £30 million. However, no buyer materialised and Better Capital sold Jaeger's debt to a company understood to be controlled by retail billionaire Philip Day, who heads up Edinburgh Woolen Mill.

A statement by AlixPartners explained that the request was made after Jaeger was "unable to attract suitable offers."

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**Stuart's a red-hot  
favourite for award**



**Stuart Woodward from HomeServe Walsall, who is a regional winner in the 2017 Heating Installer Awards**

A HEATING engineer from Walsall has been named one of the UK's best after going above and beyond the call of duty to help a visually impaired customer with his central heating.

Stuart Woodward, from HomeServe Walsall, has been crowned a regional winner in the West Midlands category at the 2017 Heating Installer Awards.

The 47-year-old, from Stechford, Birmingham, will now compete against nine other regional winners in a bid to be crowned the country's best heating engineer, with the result being determined by an online public vote.

Mr Woodward said: "I'm over the moon to be named as one of the UK's best heating engineers. The recognition is really humbling personally."

"Back in December, I'd taken a call from a homeowner in need of some help with his central heating. As I was talking to him I became aware that he was visually impaired and having terrible problems using the manual thermostat on his boiler. It was clear that he needed a better way to control the temperature in his home."

## Work starts on gamma camera at hospital

**WORK has begun to install a state-of-the-art gamma camera which can detect cancerous tumours and a host of other medical problems at Walsall Manor Hospital.**

Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust needs to replace its current gamma camera as it is outdated after being installed a decade ago.

The replacement camera together with the associated building work is costing in excess of £650,000 and will improve image quality and diagnosis as well as offering an improved service to patients.

It will be possible to perform modern examinations after the camera is installed, and patients who currently have to travel to other hospitals for their examination will now be able to receive this in Walsall.

Most patients who require this nuclear medicine scanning are patients on cardiac, cancer, renal, lung or breast clinical pathways and are predominantly outpatients or referred by their GP.

Mark Sinclair, lead director for estates and facilities with Walsall Healthcare, said: "One of the key objectives in our vision of becoming your partners for first class integrated care

**By Jordan Harris**

is around providing safe, high quality care – the care we would want for our own families and loved ones.

"This investment will improve our patients' experience, improve the range of scans we can offer locally and help speed up our treatment pathways."

"The floor has to be reinforced to support the new gamma camera which is above the Clinical Measurement Unit but this will take place out of hours."

To help towards the costs, the Walsall League of Friends group, who run a shop inside the hospital, generously donated £100,000.

Mr Sinclair said: "I'd like to once more place on record the Trust's thanks to the League of Friends for its significant donation."



# The ricket

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# Comedy chaos? We'll guarantee it

**B**OGIES! One simple word that sums up the Saturday mornings of a generation. Now, more than 10 years later, comedy duo Dick and Dom, or Richard McCourt and Dominic Wood, are back with their live tour.

It reaches the Core Theatre in Solihull on April 22, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall on August 17 and Stafford Gatehouse on October 29.

The pair sat down with The Ticket to fill us in on what mad capers fans can expect from the show.

"Basically we split the crowd into two different teams so we have the Dick vs the Dom," says Dom.

"We play loads of different games, we bring the crowd up on stage to play games as well and then whoever wins the round gets a point for their team. Then the team with the most points wins!"

Nothing is this simple in the world of Dick and Dom – and anything can happen on their live tour, with each night promising to be different.

"We've been doing it for about five or six years now but this is the first time we've done it as a UK tour," says Dick.

"It's really good fun, it's one of those shows that has the same sort of feel as Dick and Dom in Da Bungalow with all of the chaos – you just don't know what's going to happen!"

## FLASH

"We can't wait to return to the Midlands, it has great audiences. We did our last tour in Birmingham in front of thousands of people and it was really warm."

Dick and Dom are famed for their own brand of whimsical chaos on our TV screens, a style that they adapted to stage in a flash.

"We've been doing this for more than 20 years now, so a lot of the ideas now have just been crafted over time that we know work," says Dick.

"The live show Dick vs Dom is basically a culmination of everything we've done over the years in one package. We're like one big joke book, one big file of different routines, show bits, festival bits and we just put all of that together for our live shows."

With such an extensive array of kooky highlights from their career – what's their favourite?

"We really have to look back at Dick and Dom in Da Bungalow for that, that's one of our favourite things that we have ever done, and obviously it had the very famous game 'Bogies' that has stayed with the audience ever since," Dick tells us.

"Obviously that audience has grown up now and we have taken it with us when we've done university tours."

It's become a classic, it was on BBC One, BBC Two and all these digital channels afterwards for people to watch."

"The 'Bogies' game just sticks, I don't know what it is with it! It channels that sort of Horrid Henry and Dennis the Menace sort of vibe that people love," Dom continues.

"We brought it back recently for Comic Relief and doing it again, as 40 year olds, was just great!"

"It's funny that most children who are watching us on BBC now, when you write bogies on an autograph they have no idea why you've put it!"

Dick and Dom's career started more than 20 years ago, after years of hard work.

"At the young age of 18 I was a tea boy and a runner and I started at the bottom and worked my way up," Dick tells us.

Dom adds: "As for me, I was a jobbing magician in

Capers – Dick and Dom bring their live show to the Midlands



the south west, and I used that in a job interview and just worked really hard.

"We were then both presenters for the CBBC but we weren't comedians really, then there was this props guy who worked behind the scenes and he used to be like 'oh, here comes Dick and Dom!' and it just stuck."

"From that moment we got picked up by producer Steve Ride and he just developed our act even more and then we discovered we could just do fun things. It just came naturally, it wasn't a conscious decision by us."

From this, a whole new generation of comedy lovers was born as children tuned into their TV screens to catch a glimpse of the raucous duo.

In 2002, iconic programme Dick and Dom in Da Bungalow first aired and it was a programme that

*The 'Bogies' game  
just sticks . . . it  
channels that sort  
of Horrid Henry vibe*

changed the duo's lives forever and led to further shows such as Diddy Movies, Dick and Dom's Hoopla, Absolute Genius and more.

"Making the Bungalow was absolutely amazing. As teenagers all we wanted to do was to become CBBC presenters but moreso, the ultimate goal was to work on Saturday morning on BBC One," Dom enthuses.

"When we eventually got the call to say they wanted us to do that, we just didn't know what to do, it was amazing. That's just half the battle, the other half is just making sure everyone loves it and thankfully we succeeded."

"We all had an absolute riot making it, every single week we were howling with laughter. Everyone there genuinely was having the best time. It led to so many amazing things afterwards, it opened so many doors."

It's not just TV Dick and Dom have mastered, they've also had stints in theatre starring in the likes of Spamalot, Aladdin and Dick Whittington.

"It's instant gratification really, you see everyone having a great time in front of you," Dick tells us.

We wonder, what's coming up for the duo?

"We can't reveal everything yet, but we do have a lot of really exciting things to look forward to!" Dom says.

"We're stacked up, and we do have some absolute crackers in the works, but we just can't reveal all yet!"

Becci Stanley

● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.





Philip Morris as Rick Braithwaite



## To Sir, With Love still has a message for us today

E.R. Braithwaite's powerful story, *To Sir, With Love*, is brought to life at Birmingham Repertory Theatre from Wednesday to Saturday, April 25-May 6.

Immortalised in the classic 1967 film starring Sidney Poitier, and adapted for the stage by the writer of *East Is East*, Ayub Khan-Din, this new production directed by Gwenda Hughes and Tom Saunders will be brought to life by a company of young performers alongside professional actors.

Following last year's sell-out run of *The Rotters' Club* by Birmingham Repertory Theatre's Young Rep, the young performers aged 15 to 21 from the West Midlands will take to The Rep's main stage again, alongside Philip Morris as Rick Braithwaite.

Based on E. R. Braithwaite's autobiography, *To Sir,*

*With Love* is an inspirational story of courage and hope. Rick Braithwaite, a Cambridge graduate and ex-RAF fighter pilot, has fought for his country but is still fighting for acceptance. No employer wants him.

As the reality of life as a black man in post-war Britain hits him, he is forced to take a teaching post in a tough inner city school. Rick's class don't want him. The world has given up on them. But Rick knows what it's like to be ignored and isn't going to turn his back on them. This is a story about fighting prejudice with hope, set during a time of austerity, so still relevant.

On what drew him Ayub Khan-Din said "It was about reading the book and seeing what resonated. For me that was the discussion about education. Especially today, as everyone is so concerned about the way we're educating our children."

See [birmingham-rep.co.uk](http://birmingham-rep.co.uk) or call 0121 236 4455.

## Kane now able to make a change



Russell Kane is a changed man. For his *Right Man, Wrong Age* tour, which calls at Stourbridge Town Hall on Sunday, April 30, you may encounter someone with a new look, fresh perspectives and a different approach to his comedy.

"In the last year I've been married and had a baby. I've changed my hair, I've changed my look, I've thrown all my eyeliner in the bin. I literally went to my wardrobe one day and got all my ridiculous clothes and took them to the Sue Ryder shop for some other man having a midlife crisis, then bought the four exact same suits in different colours from Topman.

Then I got my hair as flat as it can go and I thought, 'that's it: this is me now'."

Russell can pinpoint the exact moment when he needed to alter his outlook and write a new show. It started with somebody at the door.

"I'm always looking for the moment that can make me look ridiculous in a way that is compelling. I was in the middle of spray-tanning myself in these tiny pants when the doorbell went.

"I went downstairs in my dressing gown and this window cleaner was touting for work. He said, 'I'm really sorry to disturb you: is your mum or dad in at all?' You might have thought this was a compliment, but it's really not. He could be talking about how I'm putting myself across so I thought: 'clothes in the bin'. And at that moment, there was *Right Man, Wrong Age*."

In the world of stand-up, acts are continually expected to evolve and grow and turn over a significant amount of material every one or two years. For some this burden might prove too much, but for Russell Kane this is a challenge he relishes.

"I'll keep changing, and I don't really ever want to stand still. I don't care if it confuses people about where I'm coming from."

His sense of gratitude for the job he's doing is palpable. "I love it. If I ever have a bad day and feel miserable, I think about the things my family have done for a living. The fact that I can go and do an hour's work on stage is incredible."

For details see [www.boroughhalls.co.uk](http://www.boroughhalls.co.uk) or call 01384 812812. All tickets £17.

## Bands uniting for charity concerts

Brum Bands Unite is a St George's Day celebration at Birmingham Town Hall in support of the Justice for the 21 Campaign, for the victims of the 1974 pub bombings by the IRA in the city.

Brum musical stalwarts such as Steve Gibbons, Quill, Vix and the Mischiefs (ex-Fuzzbox) and Morganisation (ex-ELO) will join Bitty McLean, Chris Tye and the Inspiration Ladies Choir on Sunday evening. Tickets cost £12.

There is another charity concert the following weekend, on Sunday, April 30, when Fudgetock 2017 is held at the Robin 2 in Bilston. The gig, from 4pm to 11pm, features six bands in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support. The line up includes Phoenix Rising, Wounded Spirit, Dirty Roxx, David Young Band, Craig Patge and White Room.

## Sir Ken spreads a little happiness

Veteran comedian Ken Dodd brings his *Happiness Show* to Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre on Saturday.

The 89-year-old comedy legend from Liverpool remains one of the hardest working men in showbusiness, though he now mostly limits himself to weekend gigs.

Sir Ken's performances are famous for their epic length as the 'Squire of Notty Ash' tickles his audience with countless gags delivered in his inimitable style.



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CHOICE



Robson Green (left)

**Grantchester (TV, 9pm)**  
New series. The return of the detective drama set in the 1950s, starring James Norton and Robson Green. Sidney receives a series of anonymous phone calls, which he realises may be linked to a series of murders in which the victims were all important community figures killed by someone who leaves dead birds as a grisly calling card. The threat forces Sidney to question whether he can reconcile his relationship with Amanda and his calling as a vicar. Leonard bonds with Hilary as she cares for her dying father, while George's investigation of the killings leads him to a mysterious home for people with disabilities.

BBC1

**6.00** Breakfast. **7.25** Match of the Day. (R) **8.30** London Marathon. Live coverage of the 37th staging of the annual event. **3.00** BBC News: Weather. **3.15** Regional Programme. **4.30** Points of View. **4.45** Escape to the Country. (R) **5.15** Songs of Praise. **5.50** Pointless Celebrities. (R) **6.35** BBC News. **6.50** Regional Programme. **7.00** Countryfile. The team explores County Durham, where Matt Baker demonstrates how to make a traditional regional dish and Ellie Harrison takes a trip up the River Tees. Sean Fletcher meets a boy scout pack involved in wildlife projects. Tom Heap reports on fly tipping, and Adam Henson meets beef farmers who feed their cows on grass alone. Including weather for the week ahead. **8.00** Antiques Roadshow. Fiona Bruce presents the show from Senate House in Bloomsbury, Britain's oldest skyscraper and administrative centre of the University of London. Items under valuation include the hoof of a horse that fought in the Battle of Balacava, a collection of stained glass panels that were recovered from a ship, and a diamond and platinum bracelet. **9.00** Line of Duty. DCI Roz Huntley struggles to ally her husband's suspicions and AC12 find a new angle to pursue their case against her in the penultimate episode of Jed Mercurio's police drama. **10.00** BBC News. **10.20** Regional Programme. **10.30** Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman reviews the day's Premier League action, featuring Burnley v Manchester United at Turf Moor and Liverpool v Crystal Palace at Anfield. **11.20** Match of the Day: The FA Cup. Arsenal v Manchester City. Action from the concluding semi-final at Wembley Stadium, as the line-up for the showpiece match was confirmed. **11.50** The Women's Football Show. Elidh Barbour presents a look at the biggest issues in the women's game, focusing on matters at both club and international level. **12.30** I'm Different: Let Me Drive. **1.00** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.05** BBC News.

BBC2

**6.00** Around the World in 80 Gardens. (R) **7.00** Gardeners' World. (R) **7.30** The Beechgrove Garden. **8.00** Countryfile. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Live Snooker: The World Championship. **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. **1.00** Live Snooker: The World Championship. The afternoon session on day nine at the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield. **6.00** The London Marathon Highlights. Ore Oduba presents action from the 37th staging of the annual event, which saw tens of thousands of runners take on the famous 26.2-mile course. **7.00** Live Snooker: The World Championship. Jason Mohammad introduces coverage of the final session on day nine at the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield, where two more second-round matches continue. Eight frames are scheduled to take place on both tables, with the players returning to the green baize having started their matches this morning. **8.00** Top Gear. Another helping of four-wheel features, including test drives and reports on the latest models, plus a celebrity taking to the show's test track in Star in a Reasonably Priced Car. **9.00** The Crucible: 40 Golden Snooker Years. Steve Davis goes back to the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield to celebrate 40 years of the world snooker championship, talking to some of the players forever ingrained in the sport's history. The venue has become the home of snooker since the championships moved there in 1977, helping to create memorable moments and scenes of drama that live on to this day. Featuring interviews with former champions Stephen Hendry and Dennis Taylor, six-time runner-up and fans' favourite Jimmy White, and celebrity snooker addicts Richard Osman and Stephen Fry. **10.00** The Rack Pack. Comedy drama based on the glory days of professional snooker in the 1980s and the rivalry between Alex "Hurricane" Higgins and Steve Davis. (R) **11.30** Snooker: The World Championship. **12.20** Snooker: World Championship Extra. **2.20** Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **3.15** Holby City. (R) **4.15** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

**6.00** CITV: Bottom Knockers Street. **6.10** Bottom Knockers Street. (R) **6.25** Sooty. (R) **6.35** Signed Stars: Share a Story. (R) **6.40** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Outdoors. (R) **7.05** Marvel Avengers Assemble. (R) **7.30** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **7.55** NinjaGo: Masters of Spinjitzu. (R) **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** Countrywise: Guide to Britain. (R) **10.00** Peston on Sunday. **11.00** Film: Carry On Again Doctor. (1969) **12.45** ITV News: Weather. **12.55** Who's Doing the Dishes? (R) **1.55** Britain's Got Talent. (R) **3.15** Film: You Only Live Twice. (1967) **5.30** Regional Programme: Weather. **5.45** ITV News: Weather. **6.00** The Chase: Celebrity Special. Emmerdale's Natalie Anderson (Alicia), actress Patsy Kensit, broadcaster Esther Rantzen and singer-presenter Brian McFadden take on a trivia expert for charity. Bradley Walsh hosts. (R) **7.00** Bigheads. New series. Jason Manford hosts the comedy game show in which contestants compete in a series of bizarre physical challenges while wearing giant model heads of celebrities. **8.00** The Durrells. New series. Louisa tries to raise some money by selling homemade food, which attracts the attention of another Englishman. However, a former lover threatens the family's plans. **9.00** Grantchester. New series. Sidney receives a series of anonymous phone calls, which he realises may be linked to a series of murders in which the victims were all important community figures. **10.00** ITV News: Weather. **10.20** Lethal Weapon. When a million dollar casino heist takes a deadly turn, Riggs befriends the only credible witness – an eight-year-old boy – and takes him into his care. Clayne Crawford stars. (R) **11.20** The Nightly Show Best Bits. Highlights of the final week, with Dermot O'Leary presenting topical monologues, studio games, celebrity guests, stand-up and video clips. Last in the series. **11.50** Peston on Sunday. Political magazine, presented by Robert Peston, with ITV News National Editor Allegra Stratton. (R) **12.40** Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. **3.50** British Superbike Championship Highlights. (R)

CHANNEL 4

**6.20** The King of Queens. (R) **6.45** The King of Queens. (R) **7.10** The King of Queens. (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** The Simpsons. (R) **1.00** The Simpsons. (R) **1.30** Film: Robots. (2005) Animated adventure, with the voice of Ewan McGregor. **3.20** Film: Mission: Impossible. (1996) Action thriller, starring Tom Cruise. **5.25** George Clarke's Odd House. New Home. (R) **6.30** Channel 4 News. **6.50** Film: Thor. (2011) The Norse god of thunder is banished from his own world when his arrogance puts the kingdom on the brink of war. He is sent to present-day Earth, where he is forced to live among humans without his supernatural powers, but must regain his abilities to defend his new home against his evil brother. Kenneth Branagh's fantasy adventure based on the Marvel comics, starring Chris Hemsworth, Natalie Portman, Tom Hiddleston and Anthony Hopkins. Edited for language. **9.00** The Island with Bear Grylls. New series. The fourth series of the survival challenge takes on a new approach, featuring two teams from different generations who are marooned on separate islands to see which age group is better able to cope with hardship. The older group, led by 86-year-old Frank, get off to a good start and soon manage to light a fire. However, the other team, under the command of its youngest member 18-year-old Freddie, get lost in the dense jungle and spend days trying to purify drinking water while suffering from exhaustion and dehydration. **10.00** Gogglebox. Capturing the households' instant reactions to what they are watching on TV from the comfort of their own sofas. (R) **11.00** Man Made Planet: Earth from Space. Tim Peake and some of his fellow astronauts make use of full-profile images of Earth to detail the remarkable impact human civilisation has had on the planet's landscape. (R) **12.00** Film: The Sessions. (2012) **1.45** The Last Leg. (R) **2.40** Location, Location, Location. (R) **3.35** Gillette World Sport. **4.00** KOTV Boxing Weekly. **4.25** Mobil 1 The Grid. (R)

CHANNEL 5

**6.00** Milkshake!: Mr Men. **6.10** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.15** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.20** Paw Patrol. (R) **6.35** Bob the Builder. (R) **6.45** Fireman Sam. (R) **6.55** Only the Little White Van. **7.00** Only the Little White Van. **7.05** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.20** Blaze and the Monster Machines. **7.45** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **1.55** Wisper. (R) **8.10** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.25** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **8.50** Little Princess. (R) **9.10** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.20** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.30** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.35** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.45** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.20** Access. **10.25** Football on 5: The Championship. (R) **11.20** Football on 5: Goal Rush. (R) **11.55** The Gadget Show. (R) **12.55** Film: The Deep End of the Ocean. (1999) Drama, starring Michelle Pfeiffer. **3.00** Yorkshire: A Year in the Wild. (R) **4.00** Yorkshire: A Year in the Wild. (R) **5.00** Yorkshire: A Year in the Wild. (R) **6.00** Yorkshire: A Year in the Wild. As winter takes its toll, cameras follow grey seal pups at Ravenscar Beach, and the progress of many short-eared owls that land on the moors. (R) **6.50** 5 News Weekend. **6.55** Film: U-571. (2000) American forces board a stricken Nazi submarine at the height of the Second World War in the hope of seizing an Enigma coding machine, but German reinforcements arrive, forcing them to flee in the unfamiliar craft. Action adventure, starring Matthew McConaughey, Harvey Keitel, Bill Paxton and Jon Bon Jovi. Edited for language. Includes 5 News Update at 7.55pm. **9.00** Film: 3 Days to Kill. (2014) Premiere. A CIA agent learns he is dying, and decides to quit the agency so he can spend his last few months trying to rebuild his relationship with his estranged daughter. He is tempted to go back on his word when an old colleague offers him an experimental drug that could save his life – if he agrees to carry out one last mission. Action thriller, starring Kevin Costner, Amber Heard and Halley Steinfeld. Includes 5 News Update at 10pm. **11.05** Film: Chaos. (2005) Crime thriller, starring Jason Statham. **1.05** SuperCasino. **3.10** Body of Proof. (R) **4.00** Criminals: Caught on Camera. (R) **4.50** House Doctor. (R) **5.15** Wildlife SOS. (R) **5.40** Angels of Jarm. (R)

DIGITAL

**BBC Four**  
**7.00** The Sun **8.00** The Moon **9.00** Horizon: Seeing Stars **10.00** The Sky at Night **11.00** K2: The Killer Summit: Storyville **12.20** The Sun **1.25** The Moon **2.20** K2: The Killer Summit: Storyville **3.45** Close  
**ITV4**  
**1.00** 2 Awesome **1.05** 2 Awesome: Guidance **2.05** 2 Awesome: LA Story **2.20** 2 Awesome: Side Effects **2.55** Best of You've Been Framed! **Gold** **3.55** Britain's Got Talent **5.15** Britain's Got More Talent **6.15** Film: The Amazing Spider-Man 2 (2014) **7.15** FYI Daily **7.20** Film: The Amazing Spider-Man 2 (2014) **9.00** Take Me Out – The Gossip **10.00** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.25** The Vampire Diaries **2.15** Teleshopping  
**ITV3**  
**11.20** Film: Columbo: Short Fuse (1972) **12.55** Foyles War **3.00** Our Queen at 90 **5.00** When Philip Met Prince Philip: 60 Years of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award **6.00** Midsomer Murders **8.00** Morecambe and Wise Forever **10.00** Ruth Rendell's Thirteen Steps Down **12.05** Wycliffe **1.15** A Touch of Frost **3.00** May the Best House Win **4.40** In Loving Memory **5.30** ITV3 Nightscreen  
**ITV4**  
**12.45** Film: Shalako (1968) **1.50** FYI Daily **1.55** Film: Shalako (1968) **3.00** Film: The Man from the Alamo (1963) **4.00** FYI Daily **4.05** Film: The Man from the Alamo (1963) **4.10** Film: The Hanging Tree (1959) **5.40** FYI Daily **5.45** Film: The Hanging Tree (1959) **6.55** Fishing Impossible **9.00** Benidorm **10.05** Film: The Naked Gun: From the Files of Police Squad! (1988) **11.10** FYI Daily **11.15** Film: The Naked Gun: From the Files of Police Squad! (1988) **11.50** BRDC Formula 3 Championship Highlights **12.55** Fifth Gear **1.55** Paula Radcliffe: Sports Life Stories  
**E4**  
**4.00** Film: Percy Jackson & the Lightning Thief (2010) **6.20** Rudest! Tube Shorts **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **10.00** Tattoo Fixers **12.05** E4's Tattoo Artist of the Year **1.10** Celebrity First Dates **2.15** Naked Attraction  
**Film4**  
**11.00** Flight of the Navigator (1986) **1.00** The Princess Diaries (2001) **3.15** The Borrowers (1997) **5.00** Rat Race (2001) **7.10** Airplane II: The Sequel (1982) **9.00** The Hunger Games: Mockingjay – Part 1 (2014) **11.20** Friends with Benefits (2011) **1.30** The Players (2012)

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FILM CHOICES

**MONDAY**  
**Welcome to the Jungle**, Channel 5, 11.05pm  
A bounty hunter is sent into the depths of the Brazilian rainforest to locate a prominent businessman's son, but ends up trying to find a legendary artefact before a crook gets his hands on it. Action comedy, starring Dwayne Johnson, Seann William Scott and Christopher Walken, and an uncredited cameo by Arnold Schwarzenegger. (2003)

**TUESDAY**  
**Kidnapping Lizzie: Nightmare Visions**, Channel 5, 3.15pm  
When 15-year-old Lizzie is kidnapped, her amicably divorced parents Judith and Martin are devastated when the police can find no trace of her. A psychic comes forward claiming to know the teenager's whereabouts, but it soon becomes clear she has an agenda of her own. Thriller, starring Nadia Bjorlin, Richard Ruccolo and Vanessa Evigan. (2016)



Fright Night, Friday, BBC1, 11.55pm

**WEDNESDAY**  
**Running for Her Life**, Channel 5, 3.15pm  
Amateur triathlete Alison Wynn hires a controversial trainer who uses hypnotherapy as a training technique and begins to improve physically, but the return of repressed memories takes a toll on her family life. Alison's daughter soon grows concerned and works to save her mother from the psychologically-manipulative coach. (2016)

**THURSDAY**  
**Deadly Departure**, Channel 5, 3.15pm  
The family of FBI agent Sarah Plummer are taken hostage while she is on a flight to Washington, DC. While on the flight, she meets a mysterious stranger seated beside her, and is forced to make a decision that could cost her the lives of her husband and 12-year-old son. Action, starring Dina Meyer. (2016)

**FRIDAY**  
**Fright Night**, BBC1, 11.55pm  
A teenager realises his new neighbour is a vampire, but cannot convince anyone of the danger they are in. He turns to a magician with a horror-themed Las Vegas show to help him. Comedy horror remake, with Anton Yelchin and Colin Farrell. (2011)

Dave feels the pressure to bring the killer to justice

On August 22, 2007, 11-year-old Rhys Jones was walking home from football practice in the Croxeth Park area of Liverpool when he was shot in the back by hooded youth riding a silver mountain bike aiming at members of a rival mob.

Rhys' mum Melanie rushed to the scene when she heard what had happened, but by the time she had reached him, he was unconscious.

Paramedics tried for over an hour and a half to resuscitate him, but Rhys was later pronounced dead at Alder Hey Children's Hospital.

As well as being the star player for his team, Rhys was a dedicated supporter of Everton FC, and had a season ticket along with his father and brother.

The club's players laid a floral tribute, boots and shirts at the scene of the crime, while players, staff and fans paid tribute to him in a minute-long applause at the home game against Blackburn Rovers three days after his death.

Over 2,500 mourners attended

Rhys' funeral at Liverpool Anglican Cathedral on September 6, with Everton footballer Alan Stubbs reading from the Bible during the service.

In the days, weeks and months following Rhys' death, more than 300 police officers and gun crime specialists were being deployed in the hunt for his killer.

This new drama chronicles the tragedy which shook the city of Liverpool and the nation as a whole, and looks at how Rhys' killer, Sean Mercer, and his associates were finally caught and prosecuted.

Liverpudlian actor Stephen Graham (Boardwalk Empire, This is England and Taboo) leads the cast as Detective Superintendent Dave Kelly, who led the investigation into Rhys's murder on behalf of Merseyside Police.

Sinead Keenan and Bryan F O'Byrne play Rhys's grieving parents Melanie and Steve.

In tonight's first episode, DS Kelly is charged with bringing Rhys

teenage killer to justice, but although the assailant's identity is well known, finding the evidence to charge him proves to be a far more difficult challenge.

The show's writer and executive producer Jeff Pope has made his name with this type of dark, real-life drama.

As well as penning the scripts for Mrs Biggs, about Great Train Robber Ronnie Biggs' wife, and The Widower about serial murderer Malcolm Webster, he also ex-produced Appropriate Adult exploring the crimes of Fred and Rosemary West.

For Little Boy Blue, Pope and the cast and crew have recreated the moving moment when Rhys' parents and brother bravely lined up in front of the crowd at Goodison Park to pay tribute to the murdered boy.

With the Z Cars theme playing as they walked onto the pitch, applause rang out around the stadium for a one-minute tribute in his memory.



Stephen Graham stars in Little Boy Blue, Monday, ITV, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

**MONDAY**  
**Amazing Hotels: Life Beyond the Lobby** BBC2, 9pm

Giles Coren and Monica Galetti work at Fogo Island Inn, which is sited on a rocky outcrop off the northeast coast of the island of Newfoundland in Canada and pays homage to the settlers who arrived from Ireland and Devon to fish for cod – with most islanders still having Irish or West Country accents. Housekeepers Cynthia and Lori rope Giles into a community boat race, while Monica spends time with local guide Norm, who reveals surprising the secrets behind growing the perfect potato for use in the hotel.

**TUESDAY**  
**Anthony Joshua: The Road to Klitschko** BBC1, 10.45pm

It is the most eagerly anticipated bout of the year, and Saturday's fight for the IBF, WBA and IBO heavyweight crowns at Wembley Stadium will be watched by 90,000 people – a post-war record for a boxing event in Britain. Joshua has 18 knockouts from as many fights since turning pro in 2013, while Klitschko has been pro for 21 years now and has 64 wins and four defeats. The Brit, who won a gold medal at the London 2012 Olympics, has said the fight 'marks the highest point of my climb through the professional rank,' while the Ukrainian, who

turned 41 last month, has admitted he is taking on 'the best of the young generation'. So who will come out on top over 12 rounds in London at the weekend? This insightful portrait shows Joshua's preparations for the big fight.

**WEDNESDAY**  
**How to Live Mortgage Free with Sarah Beeny** Channel 4, 8pm

Some people might think it's easy to live mortgage free with Sarah Beeny – you just move in and let her pay the bills using her Property Ladder money. But seeing as we can't all fit in her spare room, she's meeting people around the country who have managed to buy their own home without racking up huge debts. This week, that includes a twentysomething couple who are building their first home together on the back of an agricultural trailer for £25,000 and a woman in West Yorkshire who managed to convert three derelict garages into a stunning work and living space for just £12,000. We also hear from the couple who halved their building costs by creating their two-bed home inside some shipping containers.



Anthony Joshua: The Road to Klitschko, Tuesday, BBC1, 10.45pm

**THURSDAY**  
**Mind Over Marathon** BBC1, 9pm

Nick Knowles presents the conclusion of the two-part documentary following a group of runners with mental health issues as they train for the London Marathon. The remaining runners attempt longer and longer distances and even travel to Wales for a mountain run. They are taking part in the marathon with Heads Together, a campaign led by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry - and the royal trio turn up to a training session to meet the runners and hear their stories. It proves a massive boost to the runners, but will it be enough to get them to the finishing line?

**The Last Kingdom** BBC2, 9pm

Aethelflaed goes missing, and her newlywed husband Aethelred returns to Winchester to deliver the news to Alfred.

With the realm in chaos, Odda finds himself questioning whether the will of his king and the good of the kingdom might now be at odds. Having dispatched his own son for failing to remain loyal to the crown in the past, will Odda now follow his lead and turn against Alfred? Meanwhile, Uhtred returns home to Gisela, and tries to uncover the truth about Aethelflaed's disappearance by his own means. However, own actions once again come back to haunt him when he finally comes face-to-face with Sigefrid, the Viking warlord he mutilated during his campaign in Northumbria. Confronted with an impossible decision, Uhtred suddenly finds the future of Wessex resting on his shoulders. Historical drama, starring Alexander Dreymon.

**FRIDAY**  
**Lethal Weapon** ITV, 9pm

Strong-willed viewers may still be working their way through their Easter eggs but it's Christmas in California, and the precinct is getting ready to celebrate. However, the festive mood is ruined when the officers are called to investigate a murder that's been linked to Eddie Flores, the deranged nephew of an infamous drug lord who has run-up against Riggs before. That's not the only ghost of Christmas past that's haunting the volatile cop.

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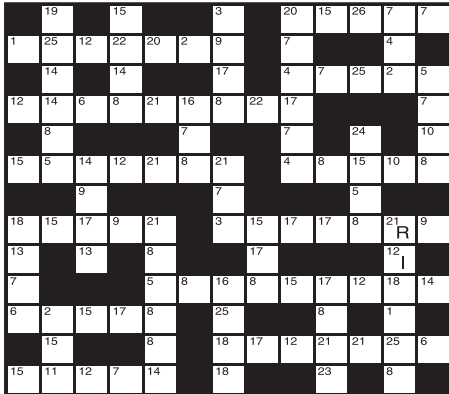


# BRAIN GYM

No.426

## Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
S	V	R	D	G	Y	E	H	T	Q	J	C	Z
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
W	O	F	A	U	K	I	B	P	N	L	X	M

1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21 R
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

## Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

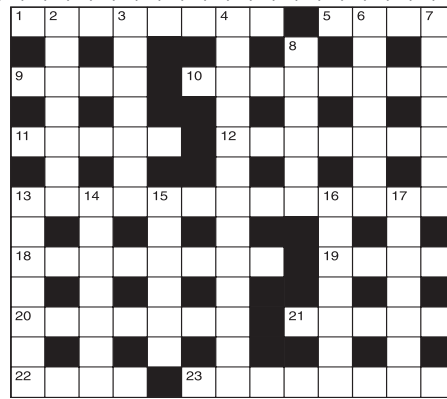
### Cryptic Clues:

#### Across

- Traffic sign erected by the socialists? (4,4)
- Alternative letters for flex (4)
- Clever - gets blockhead to take drink round (4)
- Matches won't work? (8)
- Command a class (5)
- Music for when students have fun? (7)
- Will serve as a gift at this time (3,3,7)
- Royal Automobile Club cared about record of runners (4,4)
- Eager to help about five (4)
- Carefully look at returned axe belonging to me (7)
- Questionable - like an angler's tale? (5)
- Quantity thus given to the first person (4)
- The usual flag (8)

#### Down

- Prohibition - leave when you've got me back to the bar! (7)
- Excuse before biblical quotation (7)
- Ideal prospects, despite being tense after 13? (6,7)
- Former 8 period (3-4)
- Cut up little Diana's religious group (7)
- Not a better half? (6)
- Counterfeiting blacksmiths? (7)
- To get back could be a miracle (7)
- The C-I-C is extremely busy (6)
- Ocean flier arrived as bride changed (7)
- Therein both are excluded (7)



### Quick Clues:

#### Across

- Odd (8)
- Just (4)
- Bill of fare (4)
- Seemed (8)
- Less (5)
- Entangle (7)
- Sympathy (6-7)
- Completely (8)
- Large town (4)
- Disorder (7)
- Rebuffs (5)
- Unintelligent (4)
- Critic (8)

#### Down

- Hermit (7)
- Strange (7)
- Cherished thing (5,2,3,3)
- Deductively (1,6)
- Danger signal (3,4)
- Weak (6)
- Inundated (7)
- To the letter (7)
- East (6)
- A permit (7)
- Memorable (7)

## Sudoku

5	9	1						
	3	7			5	1		
1	3	4	2					
8				6		3		
	5		3	6	7	2		
4	6	9		4			7	
		2	7	5		4		

Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

### LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

5	7	4	6	8	9	1	2	3
8	3	9	4	2	1	7	5	6
6	2	1	7	5	3	4	9	8
4	6	2	5	7	8	3	1	9
3	9	7	1	6	2	8	4	5
1	5	8	9	3	4	2	6	7
7	4	3	2	9	5	6	8	1
2	8	5	3	1	6	9	7	4
9	1	6	8	4	7	5	3	2

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:  
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Impact; 4 Knocks; 9 Steering wheel; 10 Crossed; 11 Elude; 12 Adore; 14 Debar; 18 Tarts; 19 Decline; 21 Window cleaner; 22 Dreads; 23 Stalls.  
Down: 1 Insect; 2 Preponderance; 3 Cards; 5 Nowhere; 6 Coeducational; 7 Solver; 8 Anode; 13 Respond; 15 Stowed; 16 Edict; 17 Hearts; 20 Crest.  
QUICK - Across: 1 Impose; 4 Compel; 9 Pervasiveness; 10 Drastic; 11 Raise; 12 Adore; 14 Undue; 18 Class; 19 Excused; 21 Accident-prone; 22 Enlist; 23 Arrest.  
Down: 1 Impede; 2 Part and parcel; 3 Smart; 5 Overrun; 6 Precious stone; 7 Lessen; 8 Since; 13 Resides; 15 Scrape; 16 Means; 17 Advent; 20 Caper.

## Quiz

- What does the Mohs scale measure?
- With which art form is Norman Rockwell associated?
- From which drink is Calvados distilled?
- Which actress was born Emilie Charlotte le Breton?
- What is Europe's largest inland port?
- Which group of plants has blue-green, yellow-green and gold-brown varieties?
- Of which church are the sacred writings called the Divine Principle?
- In which TV series did Lionel Stander play Max?
- Whom did Idi Amin depose in 1971?
- Of which ocean is the Beaufort Sea a section?

### Last week's solutions:

- Quiz: 1 New Zealand; 2 Prince Charles; 3 Partridge; 4 Minerva; 5 Robert Schumann; 6 Flushing; 7 Onion; 8 French; 9 Macaque; 10 The Warner Brothers.

Niner: UNIVERSAL

## Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

83412  
5249  
42167927

gives a Swedish actress,  
gives a British actress,  
gives a Romanian-born American actor.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



Return coach travel from Brownhills, Cannock, Dudley, Walsall, Wolverhampton and West Bromwich\*

\*Please note: Not all pick up points are available on all breaks.

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# Why it's the Bel-gium of the ball

AS a man who avoids buying clothes until his jeans are almost threadbare, my sense of fashion could be described as inept.

I know vintage handbags can be a serious investment and Jimmy Choo is a shoemaker. But that's about it. So as my train rolls into Antwerp, Belgium's second city and one of Europe's biggest fashion and design hubs, I begin to wish I'd invested a bit more time and effort in my wardrobe.

Fortunately, the city's sense of style extends way beyond clothing. In terms of both architecture – and attitude – Antwerp, I soon discover, is seriously cool.

The journey to Antwerp takes three hours from London via Brussels on the Eurostar, so it's within relatively easy, hassle-free reach.

I disembark at the striking Antwerp Central Station, rated as one of the most beautiful train stations in the world for its striking stone and marble interior. Although originally built in the late 19th century, it's a mishmash of architectural styles.

Eclectic

"It's got a few influences," our cycle tour guide, Nicolas de Belder, from Cyclant tells me, as we tour around the city on two wheels.

"Antwerp is very eclectic," he continues, giving me a brief history of the city that's home to around 500,000 inhabitants.

An important trading centre for sugar in the 1500s, it's now best known for its diamond and chemical industries. It's also one of the busiest ports in Europe and more important to Germany than Hamburg – or so Nicolas claims.

I've learned so much in my brief time in the city already, but there's more to come. Nicolas' lessons extend beyond economics and design, to encompass a thorough explanation on how to take a bike on an escalator.

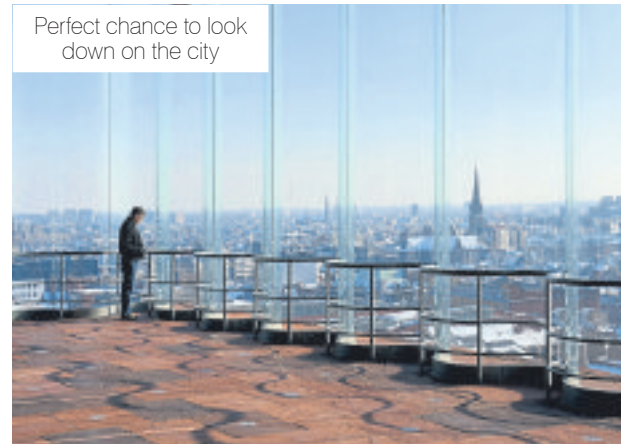
City slicker – with a clear view of Antwerp



There are few bridges in Antwerp, making tunnels underneath the river Scheldt the best crossing points. Many are accessed via escalators, and city cyclists learn from a young age that the correct way to carry a bike on these moving stairways is to lock the front wheel against a step, creating a 'T' shape.

I pop out on the river's left bank, a far quieter part of the city with spectacular views across to the old town and Antwerp's port. Rising high above the building tops is the spire of the Gothic Cathedral of Our Lady. The adjacent tower was never finished, only reaching a third

Perfect chance to look down on the city



of its intended height. In a country as flat as Belgium, anything tall is a major attraction, and Antwerp's cathedral is no exception.

The viewing platform atop the Museum aan de Stroom (MAS), is far more accessible. The building is a prime example of contemporary architecture and reflects the city's trading history and modern industrial focus.

Beer, is ubiquitous in Belgium, so I'm happy to be heading to De Koninck brewery.

It has been pumping out a fine selection of liquid

amber since 1833, and the site has evolved to include a butcher, cheesemonger, bakery, chocolate shop and even a cycling store. Refreshingly, there is a ban on any chain retailers.

Back in the city centre, walking off my liquid lunch, I stroll along Schuttershofstraat, where Chanel and Burberry sit alongside local designer stores Natan and Coccodrillo. Perhaps I don't fully appreciate the city's concept stores and trend-setting designs, but what I've discovered in Antwerp is style, innovation and imagination to boot.

NICK MCAVANEY

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## Ideal for first time buyer and there is no chain involved

**An ideal first time buy, this spacious two-bedroomed end terraced home in Pargeter Street, Walsall, is for sale through Redstones at £100,000 with no chain!**

Also having double glazing and gas central heating, its accommodation briefly comprises an open plan through lounge/dining room, a fitted kitchen, a family bathroom, two double bedrooms and a rear garden.

In more detail the open plan lounge/diner has a UPVC front door, windows to the front and rear, stairs leading off to the first floor landing, a feature fireplace with an electric fire and a door leading to the kitchen.

The fitted kitchen has a window to the rear, a door to the rear garden, matching, wall, base and drawer units, roll top work surfaces with tiled surrounds, a stainless steel sink and drawer, a tiled floor, a four-ring gas hob and electric oven with an extractor hood, a 'Worcester' combination boiler built in the cupboard and a door to the bathroom.

The bathroom has a window to the rear and side, a low level W.C, pedestal wash hand basin, tiled flooring, extractor fan and a panelled bath.

On the first floor landing there are doors leading to the bedrooms. Bedroom one has a window to the front. Bedroom two has a built in cupboard.

Outside to the rear there is a patio area and a water tap and gated rear entry.

Redstones was established in 2003 with the aim of providing exceptional customer service in a sector with a reputation for delivering the opposite. Today they are an expanding network of independently run estate agents and letting agents, all offering the first-rate standards that epitomise the Redstones brand.

A company spokesman said: "At Redstones, our focus is on delivering a unique range of services tailored to the very real needs of our customers. Whether you have a single property to sell or let, an expanding portfolio to manage or you are simply exploring your options, our property experts are here to help. The nature of property sales is evolving with 80 per cent of all property searches now carried out online. Our comprehensive marketing strategy and prominent online presence takes advantage of this trend."

## WALSALL £100,000



### TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY

**AGENT: Redstones**

**TEL: 01922 235 350**

**EMAIL: [info@redstones.co.uk](mailto:info@redstones.co.uk)**

### KEY FEATURES

End terraced property

2 double bedrooms

Well presented and spacious

No chain

Popular area



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- Solid marketing advice to help you sell fast

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## Beautifully presented in a desirable spot

**WALSALL**  
**£250,000**

This beautifully presented property in Allerdale Road, Clayhanger, Walsall, has been much improved and extended.

It is for sale through Goodchilds at £250,000 with the huge benefit of having no chain! Its great-sized accommodation briefly consists of a re-fitted kitchen with a separate utility room, a guest WC, a dining room and a spacious lounge.

The first floor comprises of three double bedrooms, an en-suite to the second bedroom and an extended and refitted family bathroom.

Call 01543 226 655.



## Attractive family home , tasteful decor and corner plot

**WALSALL**  
**£289,950**

<<<

This generous detached family home on a corner plot in Norton Lane, Walsall, comes with a detached double garage and kennels.

Deceptively spacious and beautifully presented, it is for sale through Webbs Estate Agents at £289,950, possibly available with no chain. Its accommodation briefly comprises an entrance porch, a through hallway, a guest WC, a generous lounge, a dining kitchen, a dining room, a guest WC, three double bedrooms, an en-suite and a family bathroom. Externally there are generous gardens to three sides, two driveways and a double detached garage.

The lounge has a window to the front, a feature fireplace with a gas fire inset and French doors opening to the garden. The dining room also has a window to the front, as well as a storage cupboard.

Contact Webbs on 01543 468846.

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**57 Ettingshall Rd, Wolverhampton**  
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Guide: **£50,000 plus**



**35 Dalkeith Street, Walsall**  
2 Bed Mid-Terraced House  
Guide: **£24,000 - £29,000**



**19 Loxdale Sidings, Bilston**  
1 Bed 2nd Floor Apartment  
Guide: **£19,000 - £24,000**



**23 Chetwynd Rd, Wolverhampton**  
3 Bed Semi-Detached House  
Guide: **£85,000 - £95,000**



**20 Loxdale Sidings, Bilston**  
1 Bed 1st Floor Apartment  
Guide: **£19,000 - £24,000**



**9 Hadley Way, Walsall**  
3 Bed Mid-Terraced House  
Guide: **£79,000 plus**



**14 Kent Street, Walsall**  
3 Bed End-Terraced House  
Guide: **£50,000 plus**



**30 Trenchard Avenue, Stafford**  
2 Bed Semi-Detached House  
Guide: **£75,000 plus**



**27 Dalkeith Street, Walsall**  
2 Bed Mid-Terraced House  
Guide: **£24,000 - £29,000**



**Flat 28 St Giles Court, Rosehills Gardens, Willenhall**  
2 Bed 7th Floor Apartment  
Guide: **£10,000 - £15,000**

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**WILLENHALL**  
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- Extended Bungalow
- Through Hallway,
- Lounge Diner,
- Study,
- Refitted Kitchen,
- Conservatory,
- Three/Four Bedrooms
- Bathroom.
- Two Driveways,
- Car Port, Garage

**\$329,950 OFFERS OVER**

**NEW**

**CHESLYN HAY**  
LITTLEWOOD LANE



- New Build Bungalow
- Sought After Location
- Through Hallway
- Lounge/Diner
- Kitchen
- 3 Bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Driveway
- Gardens

**\$275,000**

**PARK ROAD BLOXWICH**  
POPLAR COURT



**SSTC**  
Similar Required

- Modern Detached
- Through Hallway
- Lounge/diner, WC
- Kitchen.
- Dining Room
- 4 Bedrooms, Ensuite
- Family Bathroom
- Garage

**\$239,950**

**WALSALL**  
GILLITY CLOSE



- Dorma Detached Bungalow
- Entrance Hallway
- large Family Lounge
- Seven Bedrooms
- Bathroom and Shower Room
- Sitting Room

**\$550,000**

**BLOXWICH**  
VALLEY ROAD



**SSTC**  
Similar Required

- Semi Detached
- Hallway
- Lounge
- Kitchen/Diner
- 3 Bedrooms
- Generous Garden
- Garage
- No Chain

**\$112,500**

**GREAT WYRLEY**  
SUNBEAM DRIVE



- Maisonette
- Lounge
- Kitchen/Diner
- 3 Double Bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Rear Garden
- Parking
- No Chain

**OFFERS OVER \$90,000**

**BLOXWICH**  
LYDFORD ROAD



- Through Hallway,
- Lounge Diner,
- Extended Breakfast Kitchen,
- Sitting Room.
- Further Entrance Hallway,
- Two Double Extended Bedrooms and
- Bathroom.
- Block Paved Driveway.

**\$285,000**

**NEW**

**BILSTON**  
BAY AVENUE



- First Floor Apartment
- Spacious Lounge/Diner
- Kitchen
- 2 Bedrooms
- Re-fitted En-Suite
- Family Bathroom
- Allocated Parking
- Viewing Recommended

**\$115,000**

**BLOXWICH**  
WOODCROFT COURT



- Modern First Floor
- 100% SHARE
- Entrance Hallway
- Lounge
- Double Bedroom
- Bathroom
- Communal Grounds
- Parking

**\$80,000 OFFERS OVER**

**LITTLE BLOXWICH**  
MILLFIELD AVENUE





- Mid Terrace
- Lounge
- Kitchen/Diner
- 3 Bedrooms
- Shower Room
- Garage
- Ideal First Time Buy
- Popular Location

**\$104,950**

**NEW**

**AKRON GATE**  
MERCURY DRIVE



- Modern Home
- Lounge, WC
- Generous Kitchen/Diner
- 3 Bedrooms
- Ensuite to Master
- Bathroom
- Gardens
- Driveway

**\$149,950**

**NEW**

**WALSALL**  
MINWOOD CLOSE



- Stunning Extended Detached
- Kitchen Diner,
- Generous lounge,
- Conservatory.
- Three Bedrooms
- Refitted Shower Room.
- low Maintenance Garden
- Block Paved Driveway.

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**Birmingham Road, Walsall**

- Three Storey Semi-Detached
- Five Generous Bedrooms
- Three Reception Rooms
- Kitchen/Conservatory
- Original Features Throughout
- EPC - E

£350,000



**Victoria Terrace, Walsall**

- Victorian Apartment
- Ground Floor
- Lounge with Open Fireplace
- Superb Views
- Two Double Bedrooms
- EPC - E

£275,000



**Walton Heath, Turnberry Estate**

- Detached Family Home
- Two Reception Rooms
- Four Generous Bedrooms
- En-Suite Bathroom
- GCH & DG
- EPC - D

£275,000



**Formby Way, Turnberry Estate**

- Detached Residence
- Excellent Condition Throughout
- Three Bedrooms
- Fitted Kitchen
- Turnberry Development
- Converted Garage
- Off Road Parking
- EPC - E

£240,000



**Mulberry Place, Dudley Fields**

- NEW BUILD
- Three Bedroom Detached
- Entrance Hall
- Kitchen/Diner
- Lounge
- Downstairs WC

£138,000



**Alumwell Road, Walsall**

- Three Bedroom Semi-Detached
- Off Road Parking
- Porch
- Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen
- Conservatory
- Family Friendly Rear Garden
- EPC - D

£129,950



**Parker Street, Bloxwich**

- Well Presented Throughout
- Rosewood Double Glazing
- Gas Central Heating
- Refitted Breakfast Kitchen
- Ground Floor WC
- First Floor Bathroom
- Delightful Rear Garden
- EPC - D

£110,000



**Waters Keep, Leamore**

- Light and Airy Lounge
- Spacious Kitchen / Diner
- Downstairs W.C
- Rear French Doors
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Family Bathroom

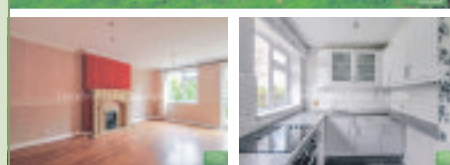
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**Lister Road, Beechdale**

- Three Bedroom Mid-Terrace
- Popular Area of Beechdale
- No Upward Chain
- Ideal First Purchase
- Suitable Buy-To-Let
- Gas Central Heating
- Double Glazing
- EPC - C

O.I.E.O £105,000



**Hallbridge Close, Pelsall**

- One Bedroom Maisonette
- Ground Floor
- Communal Gardens
- Ample Communal Parking
- Desirable Pelsall Location
- Spacious Lounge
- Refitted Bathroom
- Fitted Kitchen
- £23 per month Service Charge
- EPC - TBC

£85,000



**Star Close, Bentley**

- Cash Buyers Only
- Well Presented Two Bedroom End Terrace
- Modern Decor
- Kitchen/Diner
- Two Double Bedrooms
- EPC - E

O.I.E.O £87,000



**Taverners Close, Willenhall**

- One Bedroom Ground Floor Maisonette
- Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen
- Double Bedroom
- Bathroom
- EPC - C

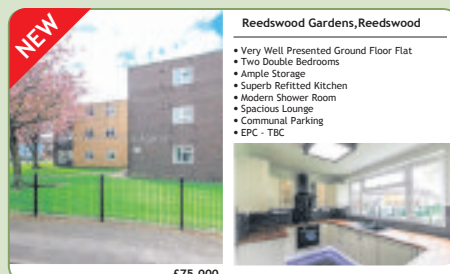
O.I.E.O £80,000



**Kemphorne Gardens, Bloxwich**

- Well Presented Ground Floor Flat
- Secure Communal Entrance
- Spacious Lounge
- Modern Fitted Kitchen
- Modern Bathroom
- Communal Parking Area
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Gas Central Heating
- Double Glazing
- EPC - B

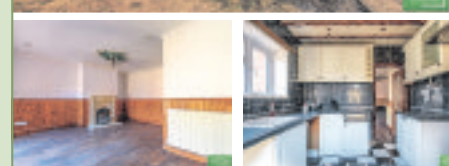
£75,000



**Reedswood Gardens, Reedswood**

- Very Well Presented Ground Floor Flat
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Ample Storage
- Superb Refitted Kitchen
- Modern Shower Room
- Spacious Lounge
- Communal Parking
- EPC - TBC

£75,000



**Reservoir Street, Alumwell**

- Deceptively Spacious End Terrace
- Three Bedrooms
- Two Bathrooms
- Lounge/Diner
- Fitted Kitchen
- Gas Central Heating
- Double Glazing
- No Chain
- Easy Access to the M6 Motorway
- EPC - D

£110,000



**Faraday Road, Beechdale**

- Two Bedroom End of Terrace
- Ideal First Purchase
- Refitted Kitchen
- Gas Central Heating
- Double Glazing
- Corner Plot
- Off Road Parking
- Popular Beechdale Area

O.I.E.O £90,000



**Livingstone Road, Bloxwich**

- Second Floor Flat
- Fitted Kitchen
- Lounge
- Bathroom
- Two bedrooms
- Communal gardens
- Communal Entrance
- No Chain
- EPC - D

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<p><b>BENTLEY</b></p>  <p><b>INGLEDEU CLOSE, WALSALL</b> Extended Three Bed Link Detached, Lounge, Extended Dining Room, Extended Kitchen, Ground Floor W.C., Modern Family Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, UPVC Double Glazing, Carport &amp; Driveway</p> <p><b>£164,995</b></p>	<p><b>COUNTY BRIDGE</b></p>  <p><b>YORK AVENUE, WILLENHALL</b> Three Bed Semi Detached, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen/Diner, Conservatory, Family Bathroom, D/Glazing &amp; C/Heating, Front &amp; Rear Gardens, Driveway Parking, Viewing Advised</p> <p><b>£150,000</b></p>	<p><b>EASTFIELD</b></p>  <p><b>BROOKLANDS PARADE, WOLVERHAMPTON</b> Newly Built Three Bed Detached, Lounge/Diner, Fitted Kitchen, Guest W.C., Modern Fitted Bathroom, D/Glazing &amp; C/Heating, Solar Panels, Driveway Parking, Enclosed Rear Garden. HELP TO BUY AVAILABLE. OIEO £140,000</p> <p><b>OIEO £140,000</b></p>	<p><b>YEW TREE</b></p>  <p><b>MAPLE DRIVE, WALSALL</b> Three Bed Semi Detached, Lounge Open Plan Into Diner, Fitted Kitchen, First Floor Bathroom, D/Glazing &amp; C/Heating, Front &amp; Rear Gardens, Shared Driveway, Great F.T.B Or B.T.L. Viewing Advised!</p> <p><b>£135,000</b></p>	<p><b>WEDNESFIELD</b></p>  <p><b>HYLSTONE CRESCENT, WEDNESFIELD</b> Extended Three Bed Semi, Lounge, Spacious Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen, Ground Floor Shower/Wet Room, First Floor Family Bathroom, D/Glazing &amp; C/Heating, Ample Driveway Parking, Enclosed Rear Garden</p> <p><b>OIRO £130,000</b></p>	<p><b>SHORT HEATH</b></p>  <p><b>LAKELOT CLOSE, WILLENHALL</b> Two Bed End Town House, Spacious Lounge/Diner, Modern Fitted Kitchen, Guest W.C., Family Bathroom, D/Glazing &amp; C/Heating, Allocated Off Road Parking, Enclosed Rear Garden, Viewing Advised!</p> <p><b>OIEO £125,000</b></p>	<p><b>QUEENS LEA</b></p>  <p><b>QUEENS LEA, WILLENHALL</b> Three Bed End Town House, 19ft Lounge/Diner, Conservatory, Fitted Kitchen, Covered Outbuildings With Storage, Family Bathroom, D/Glazing &amp; C/Heating, Off Road Parkino, Enclosed Rear Garden</p> <p><b>OIEO £125,000</b></p>	<p><b>ASHMORE LAKE</b></p>  <p><b>ASHMORE LAKE ROAD, WILLENHALL</b> Three Bed Semi Detached, Lounge, Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen, Ground Floor Bathroom, D/Glazing &amp; C/Heating, Generous Rear Garden, Ideal FTB, Viewing Advised.</p> <p><b>OIEO £95,000</b></p>
<p><b>WILLENHALL</b></p>  <p><b>VICTORIA STREET, WILLENHALL</b> Two Bed Mid Terrace, Two Reception Rooms, Fitted Kitchen, Two Double Bedrooms, Loft Room, Modern Family Bathroom, D/Glazing &amp; C/Heating, Enclosed Rear Garden. Great F.T.B Or B.T.L.</p> <p><b>£90,000</b></p>	<p><b>WILLENHALL</b></p>  <p><b>GIPSY LANE, WILLENHALL</b> Three Bed Victorian Semi, Lounge, Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen, Ground Floor Bathroom, D/Glazing &amp; C/Heating, Rear Garden, Tenanted At £550 PCM, Viewing Advised</p> <p><b>OIEO £90,000</b></p>	<p><b>WILLENHALL</b></p>  <p><b>VICTORIA STREET, WILLENHALL</b> Two Bed Mid Terrace, Two Reception Rooms, Modern Fitted Kitchen, Utility Area, First Floor Family Bathroom D/Glazing &amp; C/Heating. Let At £475 PCM</p> <p><b>£85,000</b></p>	<p><b>LODGE FARM</b></p>  <p><b>STROUD AVENUE, WILLENHALL</b> Two Bed Ground Floor Flat, Spacious Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Family Bathroom, D/Glazing &amp; C/Heating, Allocated &amp; Visitors Parking, Ample Storage Throughout, Excellent Alternative To A Bungalow</p> <p><b>£70,000</b></p>	<p><b>BENTLEY</b></p>  <p><b>W'OTN ROAD WEST, WALSALL</b> Sold In Under 24 Hours First Viewing Similar Properties Required</p> <p><b>£175,000</b></p>	<p><b>WILLENHALL</b></p>  <p><b>STROUD AVENUE, WILLENHALL</b> Sold In Under 7 Days Similar Properties Required Buyers Waiting</p> <p><b>£155,000</b></p>	<p><b>ASHMORE LAKE</b></p>  <p><b>ASHMORE LAKE ROAD, WILLENHALL</b> Sold In Under 7 Days First Viewing Similar Properties Required</p> <p><b>£120,000</b></p>	<p><b>WILLENHALL</b></p>  <p><b>LITTLE CLOTHIER STREET, WILLENHALL</b> Sold In 48 Hours First Viewing Similar Properties Required</p> <p><b>£110,000</b></p>





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	1		2
	1	EPC	C

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	1	EPC	C



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[ 63 PLATE ] - [ 66 PLATE ]  
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[ 10 PLATE ] - [ 64 PLATE ]  
**FABIA**  
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[ 15 PLATE ] - [ 66 PLATE ]  
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[ 14 PLATE ] - [ 66 PLATE ]  
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[ 16 PLATE ] - [ 66 PLATE ]  
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# Luxurious, elegant compact car with moves like Strictly!

By Andy Richardson

I peered over the bonnet. It stretched further into the distance than the Golden Gate Bridge and for a moment I thought I might need binoculars. Because the Infiniti Q30 is a curvaceous beast; part super-model, part muscled-up gym dude. Its curves roll like waves on the Atlantic; all ebb and flow, rise and fall. They conceal a ballsy 2.2 litre diesel engine that powers from 0-62 in 8.5 seconds. And if you can find a road with no speed cameras and no speed limits you can squeeze it to 134mph. Vroom blinkin' vroom.

The impressive styling, however, is just the start of it. For the aesthetic qualities of the Q30 are backed up by ritzy comfort, state-of-the-art technology, impressive performance and more grunt than a 93 decibel Maria Sharapova serve. 15-Love.

But before we marvel at the satin chrome window trim, dual USB ports and six speaker sound system or the tyre pressure monitoring system to make sure it's phat tyres can cope with a tarmac feast, let's dwell for a moment on that beautiful exterior.

The Infiniti is, quite simply, drop dead gorgeous. A toothy grill and gentle undulations give the front magnetic attraction. LED auto-level headlights provide high level illumination while big-is-beautiful bonnet gives it kerb appeal. The Q30 is a real bobby dazzler, a head-turning, show-stopping stunner.

It's impressive on the inside as it is outside. A leather steering wheel and shift leather stands proudly above a leatherette dashboard and Nappa leather seat finishings. There are wood inserts for the door panels and centre cluster. Power lumbar support and three heat setting seats for the driver and passenger



The Infiniti Q30 has impressive styling backed up by ritzy comfort, state-of-the-art technology and impressive performance

chairs make driving – or being driven – as pleasurable as taking front row seats at Birmingham's lavishly-upholstered Symphony Hall.

An all-singing, all-dancing entertainment system that's intuitive and responsive adds to the fun. Dual USB ports with iPod and smart phone connectivity, active noise cancellation, a cd player and Bluetooth streaming, voice recognition and touch street infotainment means you can listen to music in just about any format at a volume that would wake the neighbours. So well-thought-out is the media package that the only surprise is there isn't also a vinyl player.

The car hugs the road like a bear with a honey tree. It offers a fantastically smooth

and sure ride; providing reassuring grip. It pulls down into the road, giving stability through corners and at speed. The sense of safety is underscored by a four-wheel ABS system, seven airbags – to protect knees and hips, as well as faces – adaptive brake assist, a dash-mounted cruise control and a lane departure warning provide additional confidence. The Q30 is all about the detail and Infiniti have gone the extra mile. So while we might expect rain sensing wipers, rear parking sensors and a hill start assist, the forward collision warning and stop and auto dimming driver door mirror are an added bonus.

The Q30 offers three driver modes: Eco, regular and bloomin' fast – sorry, we meant to say 'sport'. The latter is cheetah-like.

Graceful and bristling with power, it eats tarmac like a choc-o-holic in the Lindt factory.

And it's that drive that's the most impressive aspect of the Q30. Because for all of the whistles and bells, for all of the I've-done-quite-well-in-my-executive-life-and-it's-time-to-enjoy-the-rewards brilliant, and for all of the why-waste-extra-on-a-shiny-BMW-Mercedes-or-Audi-when-this-provides-all-of-their-brilliance-for-a-fraction-of-the-price value; the Q30 is, first and foremost, a delight to drive.

Quick, sturdy, powerful and responsive, it's an executive model with sports car feel; a luxurious and elegant statement-of-a-car that handles as beautifully as a pro dancer on Strictly.

INFINITI Q30 FROM £20,850



## Trauma of being stranded roadside

Close to half a million UK drivers a year are left stranded on the road after being involved in accidents that leave their cars immobile.

One in eight drivers are also forced to await rescue on a dangerous stretch of road, research by Direct Line has revealed.

The survey, which took into account 2,006 responses by UK adults, also found that 52 per cent of respondents under 35 felt vulnerable following an accident.

Simon Williams, RAC spokesman, said: "Being stranded at the side of a busy road after an accident can be a frightening experience.

"Having attended the scenes of thousands of accidents RAC recovery teams often find motorists and their passengers still in their vehicles on busy roads.

"We strongly advise everyone in a stricken vehicle to move to a place of safety as quickly and as carefully as possible to avoid the risk of being involved in another incident, unless you are unable to or it would put you in greater danger to do so."

The survey also revealed that a quarter of drivers had to resort to calling friends or family members to come and rescue them.

Gus Park, head of motor insurance at Direct Line, said: "Being stranded by the roadside can be extremely distressing for the driver and passengers involved, especially after a collision that leaves the vehicle unroadworthy. With a thousand people involved in car accidents every day, the last thing they need is to be left stranded in a vulnerable, or inconvenient location with no means to get to their destination."

The data also showed that female drivers were more likely to call a partner, while men preferred to contact their insurers first.

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2013/63	Audi A1 1.6 TDI S Line Sportback 5dr, Silver, 44,000, Diesel	£10,750
2010/10	Audi A5 2.0 TDI Sport 2dr, White, 70,295, Diesel	£10,000
2007/57	Mazda MX-5 2.0 Sport 2dr, Black 38,611, Petrol	£6,500
2015/15	Nissan Juke 1.2 DIG-T Acenta Premium 5dr, (start/stop), White, 13,000, Petrol	£10,500
2013/63	Ford Fiesta 1.6 TDCi EcoDynamic DPF Zetec S 3dr, Red 28,000, Diesel	£8,000
2013/13	Mercedes-Benz C Class 2.1 C220 CDI BlueEFFICIENCY AMG Sport Sport Coupe 7G-Tronic Plus 2dr, White 26,000, Diesel	£15,500
2013/63	Vauxhall Insignia 2.0 CDTi ecoFLEX SRI Sport Tourer 5dr, (start/stop), Red, 75,468, Diesel	£9,000
2013/13	Mercedes-Benz A Class 1.6 A200 AMG Sport 5dr, Red, 29,643, Petrol	£15,250
2015/15	Jaguar XF 2.2 TD R-Sport Black Sportbrake 5dr, (start/stop), White, 23,285, Diesel	£25,000
2014/14	Jaguar XF 3.0 TD V6 Portfolio 4dr, (start/stop), Red, 40,661, Diesel	£23,000
2011/11	Vauxhall Corsa 1.4 i 16v SRI 3dr, (a/c), White, 78,380, Petrol	£4,250
2016/16	Audi A5 1.8 TFSI S Line 2dr, (start/stop), Grey, 6,257, Petrol	£22,000
2013/63	Vauxhall Corsa 1.2 i 16v SXi 3dr, White, 16,961, Petrol	£5,500
2014/64	Vauxhall Astra 2.0 i 16v VXR 3dr, White, 16,038, Petrol	£16,000
2014/14	Ford Focus 1.6 TDCi Zetec 5dr, White, 31,711, Diesel	£8,500
2013/13	Mercedes-Benz C Class 3.0 C350 CDI AMG Sport 7G-Tronic Plus 5dr, Red, 43,224, Diesel	£17,000
2013/62	Volkswagen Passat 2.0 TDI BlueMotion Tech Sport 5dr, White, 124,181, Diesel	£7,750+vat
2013/62	Volkswagen Touran 2.0 TDI BlueMotion Tech Sport MPV 5dr (7 Seats), Silver, 57,517, Diesel	£13,000+vat
2011/61	Suzuki Jimmy 1.3 SZ4 3dr, Grey, 87,250, Petrol	£6,500
2015/15	Ford Kuga 2.0 TDCi Titanium Station Wagon (AWD) 5dr, Grey, 7,831, Diesel	£16,500
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2015/15	Vauxhall Corsa 1.4 i ecoFLEX Excite 3dr, (a/c), Green, 33,088, Petrol	£6,500
2014/64	Honda Civic 1.6 i-DTEC SR Hatchback 5dr, Grey, 29,912, Diesel	£12,000
2011/11	Volkswagen CC 2.0 TDI BlueMotion Tech GT 4dr, Black, 99,391, Diesel	£8,500
2014/64	Volkswagen up! 1.0 Move Up Hatchback ASG 5dr, Silver, 26,673, Petrol	£7,000
2011/11	Mercedes-Benz GLS 3.0 GLS350 CDI BlueEFFICIENCY 7G-Tronic Plus 4dr, Black, 65,918, Diesel	£15,250
2006/56	Ford Focus 1.6 Zetec Climate 5dr, Silver, 94,500, Petrol	£2,250
2014/14	Mitsubishi Shogun 3.2 DI-DC SG3 5dr, (LWB), Silver, 9,270, Diesel	£23,000
2016/16	Vauxhall Corsa 1.6 i 16v Turbo VXR Hatchback 3dr, White, 7,163, Petrol	£12,500
2016/16	Fiat 500 1.2 Lounge 3dr, (start/stop), Grey, 4,552, Petrol	£8,250
2015/65	SEAT Ibiza 1.4 16v Toca 5dr, White, 8,729, Petrol	£7,250
2014/14	Audi A1 1.4 TFSI Sport 3dr, Black, 12,013, Petrol	£10,750
2015/15	Mercedes-Benz A Class 1.5 A180 CDI SE 7G-DCT 5dr, Blue, 15,536, Diesel	£14,750
1974	Rolls-Royce Corniche 6.8 2dr, Blue, 66,550, Petrol	£26,500

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# Restored 'spy van' on show



Period-correct 'spying' equipment was installed during restoration of the van which was active for ten years

A blue Ford Transit used by the government for surveillance operations will be displayed complete with period-correct camera and monitoring equipment.

The former government 'spy van' has been fully restored for display at the forthcoming Consumer Vehicle Show.

The blue 1988 Ford Transit used to be owned by HM Revenue and Customs and was used by the

agency to monitor tax avoiders.

It has now been restored to its original glory and is due to go on display at the Commercial Vehicle Show at Birmingham NEC between April 25 and 27.

Paperwork with the vehicle shows that it operated in south-east, north-west, north-east England as well as Scotland, covering just 6,000 miles between 2003 and 2013.



The mileage now reads 48,000.

After seeing service with government, it was bought by James Davis, director of commercial vehicles at Manheim Auctions, in 2014.

It then underwent restoration at experts C Walton Ltd in Bruntingthorpe, Leicestershire, and had period-correct cameras, microphones and other monitoring equipment fitted to give the interior an authentic feel.

The stalwart Ford Transit is one of the most iconic and highest-selling vans ever made.

Introduced in 1965, more than eight million examples have been sold – this particular van was initially restored to celebrate the model's 50th birthday.

On May 22, the 'spy van' Transit will go up for auction with no reserve to raise money for the Alzheimer's Society.



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**Department for Transport**

**ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 - SECTION 14(1)(a) AND THE MOTORWAYS TRAFFIC (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 1982 - REGULATION 16(2)**  
**THE M6 TOLL MOTORWAY (JUNCTION 11A TO JUNCTION 17) (STAFFORDSHIRE) (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) ORDER 2017**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Secretary of State for Transport intends to make an Order on the M6 Toll Motorway, in the County of Staffordshire, to allow resurfacing, safety fencing, drainage maintenance and communication and electrical works to be carried out.

The effect of the Order will be to close –  
1) the southbound carriageway of the M6 Toll from its junction with the exit slip road at 11a, to its junction with the entry slip road at Junction 17;  
2) the slip road leading to the southbound carriageway of the M6 Toll at Junction T8; and  
3) various lanes of the southbound carriageway of the M6 Toll from a point 120 metres north of the centreline of Great Saredon Road overbridge, to a point 170 metres south of the centreline of A460 Middlehill Overbridge, and allow traffic to run on the hard shoulder.

The work will be carried out overnight between 21:00 hours and 06:00 hours and is expected to start on Tuesday 9 May 2017 and continue for 8 months. The order will come into force on 2 May 2017.

Vehicles being used for police, fire brigade or ambulance purposes and vehicles being used by a traffic officer or being used in connection with the works will be exempt from the closures.

A diversion route via the A460 will be signed.

For further information please contact Letty Askew of Highways England Company Limited on 0300 470 2799.

J Griffiths, a Divisional Director in the Department for Transport.

**Walsall Council, Planning, Engineering and Transportation**

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Development Management Procedure Order 2015 (as amended)

The below applications have been made to the Walsall Council. Applications can be viewed at First Stop Shop, Civic Centre, Walsall or online [www.walsall.gov.uk/planning](http://www.walsall.gov.uk/planning). Representations can be made online, email: [planning@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:planning@walsall.gov.uk) or in writing to Head of Planning and Building Control, Civic Centre, Darwall Street, Walsall, WS1 1DG. Representations should be made within 21 days of the date of this notice. Please note: Your letter and personal details will form part of the planning file which is a public document and will be available for inspection at the Council Offices. The information may be released as part of a request under the Freedom of Information Act.

17/0371 Jump Nation Ltd FOR: VARIATION OF CONDITIONS 2, 7 AND 16 OF PLANNING PERMISSION 15/0488/FL TO REMOVE ACOUSTIC FENCE, AMEND PLANNING SCHEME, CYCLE STORE AND REFUSE STORE. AT: OLIVION HOUSE, BENTLEY MILL WAY, BENTLEY WALSALL, WS2 0BY

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17/0226 Mr Kenneth Jenkins FOR: ERECTION OF GARDEN SHED, GREENHOUSE AND JACUZZI HOT TUB IN REAR GARDEN AT: 4, ALREWIC GARDENS, WALSALL, WS9 8NT

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**HILDA CRADDOCK (Deceased)**  
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The Paul Hunter Foundation team overcame Pennfields D in the Consolation Cup final



Plate competition runner up Chris Ward picking up silverware from Evans



Plate winner Dan Ward with league chairman Derek Evans



Secretaries handicap winner Mark Gilbert (Sedgley WMC) with trophy

# Serial winner Dan wards off rival to make history

**DANIEL WARD** has become the most decorated player in the history of the Staffs and West Midlands Snooker League.

The Sedgley Ex-Service potter added another piece of silverware to his sizeable haul by claiming the Plate Competition.

Ward rolled in breaks of 46 and 44 on his way to a 3-1 success against Chris Ward (Stafford Institute).

It was his first Plate success having previously won the Individual Championship, Individual Handicap, Junior Championship, Pairs Medley, Foursomes, 3x2 Handicap and the Division One title.

Mark Gilbert (Sedgley WMC) also had cause for celebration after lifting the Secretaries Handicap title.

Gilbert, the league's general secretary, beat Neil Beckley (Hotshots) by a comfortable aggregate score of 189-105 despite a 48 break from Beckley.

There was a team triumph for The Paul Hunter Foundation in the Consolation Cup final.

The Division Four side overcame Division Six outfit Pennfields D 546-512 to claim the trophy for the second time having won it in 2015.

## Resistance

Connor Showell, Nathan Edwards, Jodie Humphries and Tom Hurst all won for the Foundation with Bill Bird the only Pennfields player to offer any resistance.

Hotshots are in pole position to win the race for Division One glory.

The championship battle turned in Hotshots' favour after they beat Stafford Institute A4-1 away from home while title rivals Sedgley Ex-Service and Brandhall Labour both lost.

Callum Downing (40), Roy Stokes, Milan Krstancovic and Jamie Brown secured the win for Hotshots which took them a step nearer to their first title.

Sedgley Ex-Service A saw their challenge go up in smoke when they were crushed 5-0 by Shifnal A.

Matt Davies rolled in a fine break of 95 for the Shropshire side with Chris Jones, Shaun Harris (47), Ian Duffy and Paul Lloyd (59) also winning.

Reigning champions Brandhall Labour A's hopes of landing a sixth straight title took a huge hit when they went down to a shock 3-2 reverse at home to

## SPORTING MEMORIES

By Nick Elwell

**Another piece of silverware is added to Mark's sizeable haul by claiming the Plate Competition**

Cannock Cons A. Riley Parsons, Mick Faulkner (50) and Dave Coborn were on target for Cons.

Karl Ashmore (79) and Alan Hooper responded for Labour, who are now three points behind Hotshots.

Division Two leaders Willenhall Liberal B maintained their two-point lead going into the final week of the season with a 5-0 win against Pennfields B. Scott Tapper (38), Simon Gough, Lee Bannister, Andy Price and Lee Thomson secured the whitewash.

Second-placed Sedgley WMC B who also whitewashed their opponents Bilston BC A 5-0 thanks to Steve Spicer, Mo Rucsaal (38), Shaf Hussain, Stuart Barker and Mark Gilbert.

Wolverhampton Electric A have already secured the Division Three titles but there are no fewer than six clubs still in with a chance of securing one of the two remaining promotion places.

Wedgesfield RBL A are now in second place after a hard-fought 3-2 away victory at struggling Fordhouses CC A.

Amery made it three titles on the spin as they clinched the Division Four crown despite losing 3-2 to promotion hopefuls Bushbury Grid A.

Essington WMC A confirmed their instant return to Division Three with a 4-1 win at Forty Four Club C. Division Five leaders Pennfields C sealed promotion but will have to wait another week to clinch the title after they suffered a heavy 4-1 home defeat to promotion contenders Bushbury Grid B.

Bushbury Grid C saw their lead at the top of Division Six cut to one point despite defeating promotion candidates Forty Four Club B.

Liam Boucher, Darren Shirley and Paul Wakeman,

in the decider, saw Bushbury home after Andrew Crowther and Sean Rowley had put Forty Four 2-0 up.

Results – Division 1: Brandhall Lab A 2 Cannock Cons A 3; Pennfields A 4 Lea Hall 1; Sedgley WMC A 4 Baggeridge Soc 1; Shifnal WM A 5 Sedgley Ex Service A 0; Stafford Inst A 1 Hotshots SC 4; Wednesfield Cons A 3 Brandhall Lab B 2; Woodfield Soc A 3 Landywood SC A 2.

Division 2: Bilston BC A 0 Sedgley WMC B 5; Golden Cue B 1 Golden Cue A 4; Golden Cue D 2 Shifnal WM B 3; Goodyear A 2 Sedgley WMC C 3; Landywood SC B 4 Woodfield Soc B 1; Smethwick Lab 2 Kingswinford SC 3; Golden Cue C 2 Stafford Inst B 3; Willenhall Lib B 5 Pennfields B 0.

Division 3: Bilston S & S A 2 Wednesfield Cons C 3; British Rail A 1 Wednesfield Cons B 4; Cannock Cons B 2 Goodyear B 3; Fordhouses CC A 2 Wednesfield RBL A 3; Sedgley Ex Service B 2 Bilston BC B 3; Willenhall Lib A 3 Woodfield Soc C 2; W'ton Electric A 4 W'ton Electric B 1; Sedgley Ex Service C 3 Landywood SC D 2.

Division 4: Blymhill 3 Sedgley Ex Service D 2; Bushbury Grid A 3 Amery 2; Coseley Ex Service 4 Bilston S & SB 1; Shepwell Green A 1 British Rail B 4; Codsall Firs B 4 Codsall Firs A 1; Forty Four Club C 1 Essington WMC A 4; Golden Cue F 2 Stafford Cons 3; W'ton Electric C 1 P.Hunter Foundation (Cue E) 4.

Division 5: Codsall Firs C 1 Golden Cue J 4; Essington WMC B 3 Woodfield Soc E 2; Woodfield Soc D 3 Bentley Moor 2; Golden Cue H 3 W'ton Electric D 2; JD's SC 3 Darlaston Cons A 2; Landywood SC C 3 Triangle SC 2; Pennfields C 1 Bushbury Grid B 4; Sedgley WMC D 3 Golden Cue G 2.

Division 6: Darlaston Cons B 3 RAFA B 2; Forty Four Club B 2 Bushbury Grid C 3; The Royal 1 Fordhouses CC B 4; Wednesfield RBL B 3 Fordhouses CC C 2; Essington WMC C 2 Pennfields D 3; Fordhouses CC D 0 Bilston S & S C 5; Wednesfield Cons D 2 British Rail C 3; Woodfield Soc F 1 Golden Cue K 4.

Consolation Cup: Pennfields D 512 P.Hunter Foundation (Cue E) 546 (Handicaps - Pennfields D 287, P Hunter Foundation (Cue E) 231).

Individual Plate: Daniel Ward 3 Chris Ward 1. Secretaries Handicap: N Beckley 105 Mark Gilbert 189 (Handicaps - Beckley 7, Gilbert 21).

## It's full speed ahead as Shelley excels

THERE was plenty for racing fans to get excited about away from the British Superbikes over the weekend as the Darley Moor Club Championship season got under way.

Burtwood's Lloyd Shelley recorded a perfect four wins from four starts, with three fastest laps, to get his title defences off to the perfect start.

But the victories did come easy as, despite leading across the line after each of the six laps during the opening Formula 600 race, rival Steven Proctor was no more than half a second behind throughout.

The Staffordshire star, however, enjoyed an easier time in both Sound of Thunder races – another title he is defending – taking victories from Jamie Medhurst by 11 and eight seconds respectively.

Stuart Hall, from Rugeley, fared well in the Mini Sound of Thunder class – which is raced alongside the Sound of Thunder bikes – taking the runner-up spot in each race, finishing an impressive eighth and ninth overall.

Dudley's Mark Cockerton sits second in the Classic 350 series table after the opening round, while Willenhall's McAuley Longmore is third in the Formula 125 class.

## Reece races into top spot in new duathlon

BLACK Country Triathletes made the most of the good weather as the season got well under way. One of BCT's junior athletes, Reece Ashfield aged 17, competed against adults in a new Formula 5 Duathlon at the National Bowl, Milton Keynes. He came home in first place overall in a time of 47:40.

Athletes took podium places in several age categories in races in Hereford and Halewoven. Rob Kennard & Scott Palmer raced in the Hereford Duathlon, Kennard finishing 21st overall and 2nd in the age group 50 category in the standard distance and Palmer finishing fifth and first in his age group (male senior) in the sprint distance.

A number of BCT athletes competed in one of the first triathlons of the year at Halesowen Sprint Tri consisting of a 400m swim, 20km bike and a 5km run. Nick Blackman was first home for the club finishing sixth overall and fourth in the Vet 40 category in a time of 1:15:20.

The only female racing for the club was Stacey Skitt who had a fantastic come back race finishing in 1:23:27 placing her second female overall and first senior female. Chris Pedley and Gary Hickman brought home first and second in the male Vet 60 age group. In the senior male age group Thomas Dauncey finished 12th overall.

## FA group's goal is to help out hospice

THE Staffordshire FA has announced a charity of the year partnership with The Donna Louise Children's Hospice.

Throughout the next year, the FA group will be working with the hospice to raise funds and awareness of the services offered to children and young adults.

The Donna Louise provides a wide range of vital services for children and young adults with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions, and their families.

Each year the charity must raise at least £3 million, most of which comes from fundraising and donations, to continue to offer its services.

Adam Evans, chief executive officer of the charity, based in Stoke-on-Trent, said, "We are delighted that The Staffordshire FA has been able to secure a charity partnership with The Donna Louise.

A spokesman for Staffordshire FA said: "It is fantastic that we are in a position to provide support and exposure to the hospice and highlight the amazing service that they provide for families throughout Staffordshire and the surrounding area."





## Six of the best on way at fight night

BCB Promotions return to Walsall Football Club with a six-fight dinner show next month. The show, 'The Next Chapter', is headlined by hometown hero, Luke Paddock (16-2), and sponsored by Grosvenor Casino Walsall.

The Bloxwich super lightweight recently joined the BCB stable and is now managed by Errol Johnson whilst training out of his Wednesday gym.

Paddock put in one of his most accomplished and composed performances last time out as he defeated teak-tough Pole, Lukasz Janik, at Walsall Town Hall. Janik, who has shared a ring with the likes of Jack Catterall and Robbie Davis Jr, proved a tough nut to crack but 'Cool Hand' boxed beautifully to record a shut-out points win.

He will be looking for another impressive performance as Johnson plots his next move.

Joining Paddock on the show, which takes place in the Stadium Suite on Friday, May 5, are bantamweight duo Kyle Williams (4-0) and Humza Ali (debut).

Wolverhampton's Williams warms up for his Midlands Area Super Flyweight clash with Brett Pidoe later this year with a six-round up at bantam whilst Brummie Ali makes his professional bow after a solid amateur career with Aston ABC.

West Bromwich welterweight, Tommy Loach (2-0), will be looking to make it a hat-trick of professional victories. The 24 year-old has defeated Ali Wyatt and Jerral Spencer to date and will be looking to make it three-in-a-row at the Banks's Stadium.

Standard tickets for 'Battleground', priced at £30, are available by calling the boxers. £60 VIP tickets for tables of ten, with two-course meal, are available by calling Walsall FC Box Office on 01922 651 414/416.

## Quorn clobbered as Khalsa come back from two down

**Sporting Khalsa 3 Quorn 2**

KHALSA fought back from two goals down to keep their faint hopes of clinching second spot alive.

Two controversial refereeing decisions defined the first half, starting with Quorn's opening goal on eight minutes.

Khalsa's Luke Shearer was hacked down, the referee choosing to wave play on, leading to a fine piece of counter attacking play which ended with Nathan Dale's cool finish to open the scoring. Goal two came on 27 minutes, Dale tucking home after great work by James Hicks down the right and a lapse in concentration by Khalsa skipper Tes Robinson.

The game turned on its head on the half hour, the referee awarding an insanely soft penalty for Khalsa after Shearer went down in the box and Dave Meese stepped up to convert.

On the stroke of half time Meese equalised, turning home in a crowded penalty area from a Johnny Haynes corner. The second half saw Khalsa finally take the lead, Brad Lawley lashing into the roof of the net on 56 minutes.

## If only – author's alternative view



Saddlers fan and Author Simon Turner with his book

A LONG-suffering Walsall fan has compiled an alternative history of football which looks at how events might have been.

**If Only: An Alternative History of the Beautiful Game** turns the sport on its head and imagines Scotland winning the first-ever World Cup, Derby County as champions of Europe and 1966 isn't the only year that England win anything.

The book, penned by Simon Turner of Lichfield, makes an enthralling journey along the paths that fate forgot. Featuring breathless depictions of the greatest games never played, it will delight the dreamer in every football fan. The author reveals

### Football

that as a Saddlers supporter, he has witnessed countless 'if only' moments over the years. It is often tempting to believe in the grand sweep of history; to conclude that the triumphs of football's greatest teams were simply inevitable. But he argues that behind all those triumphs lie the countless disappointments of teams that were denied glory by a cruel bounce, the width of a crossbar or a dubious refereeing decision.

Published by Pitch Publishing, *If Only* is available for £9.99.

# WE DESERVED WIN: WHITNEY

**BOSS Jon Whitney felt Walsall got the win they deserved after a late Joe Edwards strike sunk relegation threatened Swindon.**

The defender netted in the 85th minute of a keenly contested clash at the Banks's Stadium to ensure the Saddlers ended a six-game winless run in League One.

Whitney's men created a number of goal-scoring opportunities with Jason McCarthy having an effort cleared off the line and Kieron Morris and Amadou Bakayoko going close.

And the boss felt, overall, his side warranted all three points.

"I thought we deserved the win," Whitney said. "When you think about it, the first 15 seconds of each half, we could have scored two goals. That is what I wanted from the players, to start on the front foot and try to get the crowd going from the off."

"I thought the energy from both teams, the way we tried to play through the thirds and play our football, was a credit to both sets of players."

### Difficult

"Usually when they are at the bottom, teams just put it forward and panic and try to get a goal that way but the way Swindon play, I think you have to give them a bit of credit."

"Luke (Williams) has got them playing really well and over the last four games they are one of the form teams so we knew it would be difficult. "But I thought our discipline was really good and we got a deserved goal. Overall, I thought we shaded it."

Before the game Whitney had called for a reaction from his players after being disappointed with the 1-1 draw secured at Shrewsbury on Good Friday.

"The players have responded to criticism really well and they deserve the credit for the win," the boss continued.

"We're three unbeaten now and we want to try to finish this season unbeaten – because you can take that momentum into next season. We didn't hide away, we tried to play it from the back and took a bit of a risk."

## Team kitted out by toll road



Lucy Green shows off her new kit with MEL's mascot and her grandad Nigel Marsh

WALSALL Ladies u-13s FC have been kitted out thanks to M6 Toll operators Midland Expressway Ltd (MEL).

For the first time in three years, the team, which is affiliated to Walsall FC and plays in the Staffordshire Girls League, have new strips.

Their need was highlighted to the MEL social committee by Tolling Services manager Nigel Marsh whose granddaughter Lucy plays in goal.

Mr Marsh said: "The team relies on parents taking the girls to training every week and to matches all around the Midlands on a Saturday morning; it is a great boost to the team to have the new kit sponsored by a local company."

Team manager Donna Simpson said: "The girls are over the moon and very pleased to have such nice new kits which wouldn't have been possible without their generosity."

MEL's Social Committee work closely with staff to choose those community projects close to their hearts which will benefit from a donation from the Drive for Charity fund.

MEL's Social Committee is always on the lookout for local charities and community projects to support. To register your charity or community project with MEL for consideration to receive fundraising or practical (volunteering) support visit [www.m6toll.co.uk](http://www.m6toll.co.uk) for further information or email [d4c@m6toll.co.uk](mailto:d4c@m6toll.co.uk)

## Wood sunk by Sphinx yet again

**Coventry Sphinx 4 Walsall Wood 0**  
FOR the second season in succession Wood went down to a controversial defeat at Sphinx Park.

With the teams level on 35 minutes Wood lost Liam Molesworth to a straight red card. A fortuitous goal on the stroke of half time put Sphinx ahead and they made sure of the points with three second half goals to keep the pressure on tenants Coventry United.

Sphinx made inroads into the Wood half from the kick-off and the sending off gave them fresh impetus.

McGarrity worked hard wide right to get in a cross that was swirling in the gusting wind, keeper Tom Miller-ship touching the ball onto the bar, it dropped kindly for Towers to fire home from three yards.

Seconds later Wood failed to clear a ball into the left of the box, it fell for Towers to hit first time, Millership diving to his left to make a superb full length save. On 57 minutes, a crossfield ball was misread by a defender allowing McGarrity to run on and fire into the top right hand corner.

On 75 minutes McGarrity won the ball right of centre, his through ball put Towers in on goal to calmly slot home number three. Two minutes later Rhys Deehan dispossessed a defender wide left and raced into the box, he laid the ball square to Towers, on a hat-trick, who headed over.

A minute later it was McGarrity crossing from wide left, Towers hitting a first time drive that was pushed away by Millership. On 83 minutes McGarrity saw his low drive cleared off the line, the ball out to Reece Blackmore who fired into the left hand corner of the net through a packed penalty area. Sphinx Park has proved an unhappy hunting ground for Wood over recent seasons, and Saturday was no exception.

## Sailing ahead with 'have a go' events

ALDRIDGE Sailing Club is getting ready to Push The Boat Out, 2017, with a week's free and low cost sailing and windsurfing next month.

Between Saturday 13 and Sunday 21 May, Aldridge and four other clubs in the Black Country will be staging 'have-a-go' events to give anyone who might never have thought they could give sailing a try the chance to get out on the water.

For full details of exactly what is on and when, visit [www.rya.org.uk/PTBO](http://www.rya.org.uk/PTBO) - to search for an event where disabled people can get on the water tick the 'Sailability' activities box.

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